

# MOVIE

A dramatic scene from a movie, likely 'The Long Walk Home', showing a steamboat on a river at sunset. The steamboat is in the center, with smoke rising from its chimney. The water is calm, reflecting the golden light of the setting sun. Numerous small boats, each carrying a single lit candle, are scattered across the river, creating a path of light towards the steamboat. The background shows a dense line of trees and a small building on the left. The overall mood is somber and hopeful.

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**Richard  
Brooks**



# MOVIE



Jean-Luc Godard talks to Michelangelo Antonioni about Deserto Rosso (p31), soon to be shown here



Since we went away, Hitchcock has made two films for Universal. The Birds and Marnie are discussed on p21.



Man's Favourite Sport? p35



Sunday in New York p37





After eighteen months of absence, MOVIE returns as a quarterly.

An advance report from Spain of Cottafavi's Los Cien Caballeros, his first film since Hercules Conquers Atlantis (p18)

An assessment of Joseph Losey's most recent film, King and Country (p25) as it goes on general release

Report on the Tours Shorts Festival (p28) and letters from our correspondents in  
HOLLYWOOD p39  
MADRID p40  
NEW YORK p41  
PARIS p42  
ROME p42  
STOCKHOLM p43  
Small talk and Short Reviews p44



Cheyenne Autumn p36



The Silence p38



Richard Brooks talks about himself and his films (p2) and writes a foreword to his latest work, Lord Jim (p15)  
Article on Brooks p10



Two Christian films p13





# RICHARD BROOKS



I came out to Los Angeles to do some short stories for radio. I used to do a short story every day, which was rather silly because who can write a short story every day? I wrote about 2500 words for a fifteen minute programme. That was in the days when NBC had two networks, a blue network and a red network (that wasn't political). I would read the story and I was getting 25 dollars for the whole programme; I got a little tired of that after a year and 250 stories. I couldn't think of any more ideas and I was beginning to repeat myself. And I thought—Gee, it would be nice to work on a movie. Everyone I met connected with movies seemed to get so much money and to be so happy.

Well, I inquired how I could get into movies. One day, someone said—I've made an appointment for you to go over to Universal. This is 1941. So I went over there and the producer said—We have a script, but the dialogue is not so good and we'd like someone to write some clever things and touch up the dialogue. So I said—How much d'you pay? And he said—How much d'you want? At NBC I was getting 125 dollars for five stories, so I said—1500 a week. He said—You must be a lunatic. I don't get that. I'll let you know.

I never heard from him. Ten days, two weeks went by and I was getting a little apprehensive at having to pay some bills. So I called him and said—What'll you pay? He said 150 a week and I said I'd take it. Well, at least I was working on *one* story. I worked for eight days, and finished the job. It was a picture with Jon Hall, Maria Montez and Sabu, directed by Arthur Lubin and called, I think, *The White Savage*. When I was going back to New York on a train, I read a review of the picture among a number of reviews all lumped together. There was a character in the movie called Tamara. "How are you today, Tamara?" That was the review.

So. I went back to radio, but I couldn't go along with that job, and I wrote some scripts for Orson Welles. He had a radio show at that time. Then one day in 1942 I got a call from Universal, a different producer. He said—You worked on that picture with those three great actors that we made here. It was a very successful picture. I said—I didn't see the picture. He said—Well, we have the same three great actors: Jon Hall, Maria Montez and Sabu, but we haven't got a story and we'd like to have a story for them. But it's got to be about a desert. —Well, there's a desert right here in the United States.—Oh, no. No Cowboys and Indians, that's out. Name me a desert. —The African desert? —No, that's Foreign Legion, been done to death. Name me



another desert. —Australia? He said —Well, who's the natives? —Australians, I guess. I don't know. What d'you mean? —No, no, he said, you know, the heavies, the *natives*. —Let's see, I don't know, there are a number of bush-wackers or something. He said, sorrowfully to me at any rate—Any niggers? I knew this wasn't my man right away, but I said —Well, there must be coloured people, yes. —Out! No race problems. Name me another desert. —China? —*The Good Earth*, let's stay away from that. I said —How about India? —Yes, but nobody's British in this cast. So who're we gonna have? That's politics, anyway, lots of trouble in India. . . . By this time I'm fast running out of deserts and I said —What about Turkey? There's a desert there. —Sounds interesting. Who are the heavies? So I said —Now wait a minute, I don't know the story. I don't know who the heavies are. He said —Now I'll tell you what. You go and write the story.

I got some National Geographical Magazines, read up on Turkey and came across a rather interesting aspect. After the First World War, they were trying to liberate the women, and many new customs were coming in, education, getting rid of the veil, and so on. Good for Maria Montez. At least she'd be able to do something in that. I built up some sort of story and sent it to him. Two days later I get a call —You let me down, boy. —What's the matter? He said —Well, where are the riffs? —The riffs? There are no riffs in Turkey. He said —No, no, you don't know what I mean. I mean the fellows in the white sheets on horses. I said —No riffs in Turkey. —You must be crazy. Now, there is a Turkish consul here in Los Angeles. Why don't we call the fellow?

Next day, a nice young man comes round: black moustache, about 30, 32. —This is going to be great for your country, says the producer. Every producer says that. —We want to do a story about Turkey, etc., etc. Who are the heavies? —I don't know what you mean. —Well, who are the natives? —Turks. —I mean, don't you have any trouble with people? —We're having some trouble right now. He said —Who are you having trouble with? —Well, we have a tribe called the Kurds, and they are having a kind of little revolt in the desert. —The Kurds? Sounds kinda dirty.

—Well, kid, he says to me, I'll tell you. Let's take the North African desert. OK, no problems. There are riffs there, aren't there? —Yes there are riffs. He said —Do a story.

Back to the National Geographics. I found an interesting aspect. When the Suez Canal was being thought about, they had to decide whether it would be a shorter route. So two packet boats left India, one to go round the Horn and the other to, I guess, Port Suez. Then the parcel would be put on horse and camel to go to Alexandria, then to London. It beat the other boat by three weeks. I thought the section from Port Suez to Alexandria would be interesting. You know, the Pony Express. Sabu could ride a horse. So I wrote it and sent it in. Two days later. . . . —You let me down. —What's wrong? —Where are the riffs? I said —There are riffs in Africa but they're nothing to do with the building of the Suez. He said —I'll prove it to you. And we go to see this movie called *Suez* with Tyrone Power and Annabella. In the second reel, six guys in white sheets drive up and blow the canal. —So, he says, you see? And he leaves. I sit there and watch the rest of the film and it turns out that these guys weren't riffs but the British masquerading as riffs to blow up the canal, because the French were building it. So I go and explain it to him and he says —I'll tell you what, let's call the



boss. Because, you see, he was only the producer and he had another producer over him. He said —Jack, I've got this story here and it's quite good. Perhaps we ought to do a screenplay. And Jack, who has a very loud voice, the kind you could hear even without the telephone, says —Well, is there anything for the broad to do? (He meant Maria Montez). —Oh, yes, she rides on horses, she rides on camels, clouds of veils, all that sort of things, it's great. Sabu gets killed and he's very heroic. Jon Hall gets wounded and they get the mail. It's the Pony Express, except it's in Africa. And Jack (I won't mention his name) he says —When does this story take place? —Well, when does the story take place. And I say —Before the Suez Canal was built. He says —Before the Suez Canal was built, Jack. Jack says —When the hell was that? And I got up and I joined the Marine Corps.

I wrote a book during the war called *The Brick Foxhole*. It had to do with enlisted men who were not in combat, and their deterioration. Later they used part of the book to make a picture called *Crossfire*. Mark Hellinger read the book while I was on service. He wrote me a letter and said that if I ever got out alive, maybe he could give me a job? When the war was over, I went and worked as a writer for Mark. I was working on story construction of *The Killers* and *Brute Force* and *Naked City* and others for him. He was a swell guy. *The Producer* is based to a great degree on the character of Mark Hellinger, and it was published just after his death, about 1949, 1950, I guess.

I went to Warners for a picture called *Key Largo*, which John Huston directed, and I worked on the shooting. I had directed on the stage, but never in films. I realised that I wasn't always going to have a John Huston to do the scripts I was writing. So we talked about it, and he said, Why don't you try directing?

All the time I was working with Hellinger, I never had a contract, just an understanding. At M.G.M., of all people Arthur Freed who loved musicals, wanted to see some of my pictures, and wanted me to come over to M.G.M. I wouldn't go over to them unless they gave me a contract which allowed me to direct as well as write. They said that if they didn't let me direct the first picture, I could direct the next, and if I didn't direct that, I could leave and break the contract.

## Crisis

The first was a picture I wrote in which they cast Clark Gable, and he or someone didn't feel I was competent to direct him. So Mervyn

Still: Akim Tamiroff and Curt Jurgens in *Lord Jim*.

LeRoy directed the picture. Then I wrote another, and that was *Crisis*. Cary Grant was the one who said —If he can write it, why can't he direct it, because he must know as much as anyone about making pictures? He was very kind and I learned a great deal from him. I was very lucky, because with José Ferrer and Cary Grant, I was with very professional people.

*Was it an original subject?*

Yes. Actually, it was an idea which had been brought in by someone. It had to do with a place called Basra, and it was kinda mixed up a little. But I wanted to do a story of this kind and I did not want a woman in it. Originally, the way I wrote the story was that Cary Grant was a surgeon, a widower. He had a little girl of about nine years of age, and he never had a chance to be with her, so he took her on a vacation to South America, and what happened to the child made a much stronger story than what happened to his new bride. But M.G.M. at that time felt, well, if you've got Cary Grant, why d'you want to have a kid in it? You've got to have a dame in it. And you're rather new just now, you haven't done so many pictures. Anyway, a woman materialised in the picture.

When they saw the picture, they said, gee, that's pretty serious. Cary in a serious picture, that could be a disaster. So they advertised the picture, "Carefree Cary on a Happy Honey-moon" all through the States, and of course no-one went to see it at all. It played in England, and I think it played in France and Canada. It was banned in all South America, Central America and Mexico. It was banned in Italy because the dictator in it was hanged by his heels; so was Mussolini. Wherever there was a little trouble in any country, it was banned. No-one has ever seen the picture except Cary and myself! But I took John Huston to see it, and he said —It's a good picture. Next time, don't listen to so many people.

*Was the Dictator meant to be Peron?*

It was meant to be someone like him. I couldn't make it exactly like him because big studios have big interests in other countries, not only theatres, but they had their business relationships, and they didn't like to jeopardise them. They like everybody to like them, to be friendly. —Why does it have to be Peron, they said, why not just a *fella*? That guy's going to be José Ferrer, it's not going to be Peron, so it doesn't really matter. But while I couldn't make him



Peron, I tried to make his wife very much like Eva Peron. Yes, he was meant to be Peron, but it doesn't turn out that way in the movie.

For the Cary Grant part, I had a number of characteristics of the man's personal habits. He is a man of habit, regardless of where he is. He's being kidnapped but still at five or four in the morning when people usually brush their teeth, he has to brush his teeth, even if he has to borrow some tequila from a native on the train. As he says later, to the dictator's wife, yes, he'll do the surgery, but he wants his fee. I wanted it to build up to the point where you would accept someone who, no matter what, may dislike something but goes ahead and does it because it's a matter of routine and principle with him.

*Why did you avoid having him know his wife had been kidnapped when he was doing the operation to save the life of the dictator?*

First of all, it was important to me, from the story point of view, that he had committed himself to perform this surgery. I wanted him to perform it and be successful. Later, when he finds out, he wants to go in there and shoot the man. I actually made such a scene: he has a pistol and he's supposed to kill this man. The note saying that if he does the operation, his wife will die, has been concealed from him. The dictator had to prevent this information from reaching the doctor. In a way, the dictator had virtually killed the doctor's wife by not allowing him to make the decision himself. But they made me shoot another scene, in which he did not kill him, but the threat to kill him caused the man to haemorrhage and die. I wanted him first to save and then to kill the dictator; save him as a principle of medical ethics and kill him as a man.

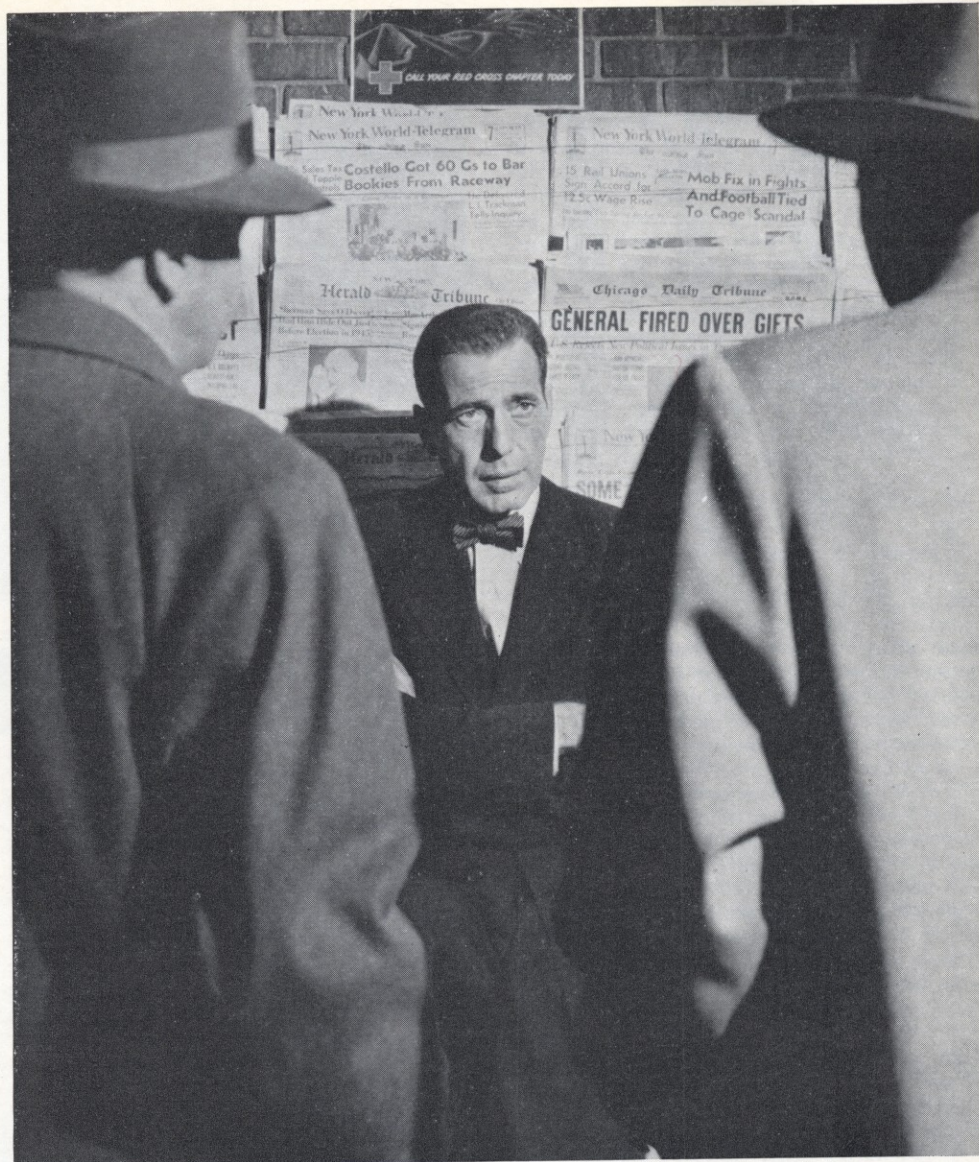
*Did you want to bump off the revolutionary leader, Gilbert Roland, at the end?*

I never even thought about going that far. The point is that the opposition claims to have only the people at heart, and their leader was the one who said to him —Well, you don't like this man. Who knows, just a slip of the knife, whether he actually dies or whether. . . ? He really has a contempt for this doctor and his ethics, but when he's shot, the first thing he does is to call for help. So it didn't make any difference if he died or not. The chain goes on. The enemy has been rubbed out. Roland is the new leader. I don't know if he's any better than the last one, but principally and basically, he does what we all of us do; cry for help when we're hurt.

*In fact José Ferrer is much the more sympathetic.* Much more realistic. At least, Ferrer has a point of view about it and he has grown up with the whole point of view. If the opposition says it's going to be better than Ferrer's rule, then it has to be better. He had never made a point of being better. He had grown up into a whole system of rule by fear and force. He was a force in his country. The purposes of the revolution were probably correct, but the leaders of the rebellion were not necessarily any better than Ferrer. Whether they were going to be or not was beside the point. Once the political aspect was revealed, we put it back on a personal basis, dealing with the ethics of the individual rather than the political scheme of things. I think it could have been more political if it had merely been named for what it was, the place and the time.

*Are we meant to like Grant in Crisis?*

I've never thought about that, whether he was meant to be liked. My intention, and he went along with it, was that he should be a man of modern times, that he, as a man of ethics who has had many of the humanities subdued in him because of his career, has to put his life on the



*Still: Humphrey Bogart in Deadline U.S.A.*

block. In other words, he has to make decisions under primitive conditions, away from his own world, the civilised world of the hospital where everything is worked out very nicely for him, where someone can pay a fee or can't pay a fee. Suddenly he is put in the real world of making a decision. Here, whether he likes it or not, it isn't a matter of routine, but whether he would get out of this alive. The whole point was whether he would do this job and what he would do afterwards, having done it. How does he act as a scientist and how does he act as a man, both in the same human being? As a matter of fact, it didn't cross my mind whether he should be liked or not.

I tried to make the Ferrer character more sympathetic because he had many more weaknesses and qualities of which he was aware. The Grant character never knew his own weaknesses; he was consequently just annoyed that he had to be subjected to this kind of business, until he was in a room with half a dozen people he had to train to perform an operation. By the way, the rehearsal was technically very correct. Grant worked for weeks learning to operate those instruments.

## The Light Touch

Sad, but I'm not even talking about that. Cary wanted to do it. He liked it, but he was committed. And so M.G.M. said, well, we have another fellow here. But the one thing that

other fellow did not have was a light touch. It wasn't his fault, he just didn't suit the material, that's all.

## Deadline U.S.A.

The one picture I made outside M.G.M. in eight or nine years. It was for Fox. Sol Siegel produced and I did it with Bogey. It was about the death of a newspaper—a good theme which interested me a great deal. It was based on the death of the old 'New York World'. The whole point of it was that newspapers that bought out other newspapers and eliminated competition were creating a situation whereby a free press was curtailed. The press is not free when there's one newspaper which can say what it wishes, but when there is another newspaper which can oppose that newspaper's point of view. When the 'World' died, the point was that it had been a newspaper which did not go along with the various elements in other papers. I myself had worked with the 'Philadelphia Record' which died.

Now Darryl Zanuck was very concerned that this was going to be called a Communist kind of a thing. He said —What do you mean, there is no free press? I said —I'm not saying that. I'm saying that this tendency leads in that direction. The story had some quite good things and I was glad to work with Bogey. He was one



of the real pro's. We became quite good friends. It was Bogey who first read *The Brick Foxhole* and he showed it to Mark Hellinger.

## Battle Circus

I learnt on *Battle Circus* and I was convinced of it after *The Last Time I Saw Paris* that unless I could do things the way I felt them, I would have to get out of M.G.M. Because the thing that was wrong with *Battle Circus* was that always there had to be a non-motivated love story attached to a piece of material. Everything has to have the M.G.M. stamp, every film had to look a certain way, and I wasn't established enough to say I don't want to do that, because I had to pay some bills and I was under a seven year contract. M.G.M. prided themselves on the fact that all their pictures looked like M.G.M. pictures. The walls were washed and clean, the air was clean, there was no dust. They had a certain style. They had a certain density in the film, a certain softness for the ladies, a certain sharpness for the gentlemen. That was an M.G.M. picture, and that was one of my stumbling blocks: why I went to Columbia. I just couldn't get thorough control. Well, they said, you know you *have* it, but they never put it in the contract.

In *Battle Circus*, Bogart was using the medical and army world as an escape?

Yes, that's right. Dore Schary bought a story from a fellow. There was actually such an outfit as MASH which flew these surgeons right into the Korean war. The story was already written, and they wanted Bogey. He agreed to do it. But the point I was going to make, and in the end never made, was that the Bogey character was never really good enough to make it in the outside world. He had to make it there, where all the other problems were simplified. But the movie became a matter of whether he got June Allyson or not. Her identification with the men who were fighting and dying "somehow" became the theme. It turned out as just a plain adventure story.

As I say all these things, I think to myself, the movies are horrible. Well, they are pretty bad in many respects. But I'm glad I made them. I wish I could have made them differently. But I think it was very important for me to have made these pictures and to have made all these mistakes.

## Take the High Ground

I like some of it, but I have a personal thing about war not being funny. Now there are some things that happen which are witty and humorous, even slapstick and ridiculously funny, but war to me is not comedy. I go to see comedies about war, and I can't laugh. It's a personal thing. On *Take the High Ground*, I did not write the script. That doesn't mean anything. It was written by a good man. And Dore Schary was the producer. But with what we started out to do, we didn't go far enough.

You see, Dore had never been in a war, and he thought it was his function to do something noble about war. This, he felt, was to make all the figures in a war heroic (except the enemy, naturally). The point of *Take the High Ground* was something with which I was very familiar because it dealt with the same subject as *The Brick Foxhole*: an incipient fascist, a fascist approach in a democratic nation, with boys who were ostensibly fighting for a cause which was worth while. In other words, how much feeling do you generate to begin with in order to fight for freedom? But the bad sergeant turned out to be a good fellow at heart, and while some of it was good and realistic, the point of it was never really made.

But all the pictures you make, especially the poor ones, are important. The trouble today is that you don't make mistakes any more, they're too expensive. But unless you make mistakes how do you learn? Can you bat a thousand every time you get up? In every other art you're permitted to make mistakes, but the mistakes are valuable. And no man's work stands on just one canvas or one story.

## Flame and the Flesh

Oh, Lord, yes. Let me tell you about *The Flame and the Flesh*. It was written by a woman, based on a French movie with Viviane Romance, which was a comedy with occasional overtones of pathos. *The Flame and the Flesh* was made here in Britain, I guess in 1953, nineteen years after the other picture. Joe Pasternak, a marvellous producer and very energetic, got this picture and convinced the studio to buy it. Lana Turner, like many others, was at that time trying to get out of the States to take advantage of the 18 month tax deal. They might work away from home for 18 months and thus pay less taxes.

One day in the hall-way, Dore Schary said to me —You're just the man. And I said —What am I the man for? And he said —Lana Turner, England, Naples, Italy, Romance. —All for me? Is this a movie or are we going away together? And he said —No, no, it's a movie. Well there was even a script. So I read the script. It's difficult enough when you don't write it yourself, but this one had to do with such themes as "You fool you!" or "How dare you!". And it was meant to be Stark Tragedy.

I said —Where did this story come from? —Well, it was a movie once, a very successful movie. —Could I see the movie? So they ran this picture for me. It was lusty and full of fun. This thing was just dreary. I said —We'll have to change this thing. There's no tragedy in this. It's just sentimental slop. But —Oh, no, you don't understand at all. She wants to make this picture in Britain, and we've got this new young man, Carlos Thompson, who's sensational. —Who is he? I've never heard of him. —He comes from Argentina, and they have this fellow in England, Bonar Colleano. So, anyway, I found myself on a plane heading for England, because in those days if you didn't work, you were put on suspension. It wasn't a matter of going somewhere else to work. Well, here I was, and when I complained it wasn't a good scene, back would come a cable —Shoot it as it is.

The only interesting thing about the picture is this. Bonar Colleano died in a car crash. Had to be something like that. Well, we got in a lot of trouble in Naples. Everyone was in trouble. This guy Thompson was running away from some girl. Lana was having trouble with her Tarzan person; he was in Italy. Colleano was having trouble with everybody. There was one girl he had, a nice girl. She once took her top thing off in Cannes. I think she committed suicide. She was a little kind of pregnant there in Naples. She had come down there to see Bonar who was convinced he was not the father. I gave her some money to go to Rome. She was a lonely, sorry figure. Bonar was going to marry the other girl.

While he was waiting for this girl, he also had a few other interests. He used to go racing round the street in this little car he had, very fast. One night, about four or five in the morning, I got a call from Pasternak. —We're in serious trouble. Help me. —What happened Joe? —Cos he had problems too. Everyone had problems. —Come to the hospital. I said —What hap-

pened to you? —Nothing's happened to me. I'm not sick. I'm here for someone else. I went to the hospital and there was Bonar Colleano. You see, she was living in this house, and he was trying to climb up to the second floor. He kept knocking at the window. He fell from the second floor and smashed his face. And there he was, lying in the hospital with no face, just bandages.

The company was mainly worried about —What are we going to do? The guy's half way through the picture. He was going to play the part that Michel Simon had played. I said to the doctor —Is the fellow going to live? —Sure, he's going to live. He's pretty smashed up. It'll be a month before you can take the bandages off his face. —What's he going to look like? —Well, at this particular time you can make him look like anything you want to, because he has to be put together again.

It was an interesting decision, because Bonar Colleano had always wanted to be handsome. He thought that was the only thing between him and stardom. Now here was an opportunity. He could have been a matinee idol. He could have looked like Robert Taylor, but we had to put him back together the same way to finish the picture. This was a decision I didn't want to take, because I felt he could have been a beauty! They brought back a plastic surgeon from a vacation in Scotland, they made the decision and they put him back together again the way he was. That's the only interesting thing about the picture. It's a terrible movie. It's a disastrous kind of thing in which Lana occasionally does do something interesting. But it didn't help around the 18 month thing. Nobody got any tax deductions. It was just a disaster.

## The Last Time I Saw Paris

Part of it was good, part was much too sentimental. It was based on a Scott Fitzgerald short story, "Babylon Revisited". They had bought a screenplay by the Epstein brothers, who were very good writers. They had written it in the period, and Dore Schary, who was running the studio at that time, thought any picture in that period would be disastrous financially. After all, love is love. "A tree's a tree, a rock is a rock. Shoot it in Griffith Park." Ever hear that thing? It had been a tradition in M.G.M. for about forty years, that every time you wanted to go on location, they said it. Griffith Park was right outside the lot. Well, "love is love", that's quite true. But that particular kind of story was indigenous to the Twenties. I learned so much from it, that when they offered me *The Four Horsemen* to re-do, I said —Fellas, you've got the wrong man. That is a story which without the First World War just won't work at all. You know, what is this business of the friendly Germans and the friendly Argentinians and the friendly French? This is not a romantic war of romantic notions. Oh, no —A war's a war. It doesn't make any difference.

*The Last Time I Saw Paris* was cast before I came on it, and a rewrite had already been started to up-date it to the Second World War. That's one reason the picture comes apart. But the major reason is that the studio executives of that time were overly sentimental. . . . Atthattime, I hadn't made any really successful pictures. I mean, they had not made much money. It was a matter of just holding on to try to get another picture. Part of it was my fault. I can't blame them for it. They had their policy. I should just not have gone along with it. It's true that the





Still: Van Johnson, Donna Reed and Elizabeth Taylor in *The Last Time I Saw Paris*.

picture fails, even earlier than the middle. It doesn't hold together. The sentimentality just bogs it down. It is neither Fitzgerald nor anything else.

## Blackboard Jungle

I was still under a seven year contract when the story of *Blackboard Jungle* came along. But by that time I didn't care if I sat it out. I felt that whenever the time came, I would just leave, and that would be the end of it. I refused really to compromise in the M.G.M. manner in photography, cutting, casting or anything else in that picture. But that was the first one where I had the chance to say, no, I don't want to do it except this way.

It was a small picture. Matter of fact, they weren't going to release it because "New York", said —It's a terrible picture, it's not good for anyone to see it. "New York" sent me an added scene, in which Glenn Ford, the teacher, goes to the police or the principal and says —You think we have trouble here. You ought to see the juvenile delinquency in Russia! I said —What has Russia to do with this story? This story I know. I've been to these schools as a kid, and I know this story. What are you talking about Russia for? —We don't want anyone to think we're criticising America. —What's wrong with criticising America? We're Americans. Dore, I'm not going to shoot that scene. You'll have to get another man in. —Let's hold it. What if the American Public says this is Dreadful and a Lie? I said —You'll still have to write another scene, because that's a dreadful scene and I'm not going to shoot it. If the public doesn't like it, that's something I can't help. And so we took it to a preview and, of course, things turned out very well. They didn't change anything. They just put a foreword which wasn't there originally and was supposed to take care of everything, you know, that this is not all our schools and so on.

I was asked —Do you have a right to show America in this light? And I said —The point is not "Do I have the right?" but "Is it the truth?" What do we do about the truth? You take any daily newspaper and send it abroad, is that America? Is America one movie? America is a million movies and a million headlines and a million people, it's not one thing. You think America is Mickey Mouse? America is a million things and this is one of them, a small thing. If it's bad, let's correct it. If it's a lie,

no-one will go to see it anyway. If you don't want to tell the truth, that's when you're in trouble. They said "none of this happens": the day the picture opened in New York, a teacher was stabbed and thrown off a roof.

There's no easy solution. I want people to say —It's not that simple. I don't want them to leave the theatre saying O.K., and then forget about it. I'd rather they went home and later said —Now what about that? What do we do about that? What do I personally do about that? Even in *Blackboard Jungle*, that was the conclusion. There was no end to that story. The negro boy says to the teacher —See yuh around Teach. That's all.

*But you do get some kind of solution in Blackboard Jungle: you say that the boys can be reached.*

Yes, but not that they *have* been reached; that they *can* be reached, and on occasions are reached. But that's only the beginning. The picture was banned in Georgia because a negro was sitting in the classroom. They went to the Supreme Court of the State of Georgia before they got that picture played there. I didn't know at that time how severe the battle was going to be for integration. To me, it was second nature. When I was at school, there were negro kids in the class. But I don't want anyone to come out of the theatre feeling —I don't have to worry about the problem any more.

When I made that film, there was less rationalisation than in any other film I've made. It was almost purely an emotional experience on my part. I felt I would try to make the film with a series of hammer blows, and the hammer blows had to put in an exact position. I didn't even have to think about it. It just fell into position.

I remember one incident. A kid with a knife drops it and another kid picks it up. Then another kid who up to this time they used to call the idiot boy, not knowing what to do, picks up the American flag, which stands in a corner. He rams it into this boy's chest or throat or something and the kid drops the knife. And they said to me —The American flag, how can you use the American flag for a thing like that? They'll throw us out of the country. I said —What do you mean you can't use the American flag to stop barbarism? What better purpose does a flag have?

Glenn Ford was cast in the picture because no one else would do it. At that time he was doing a picture at M.G.M. with Eleanor Parker. It was about some dying singer. Glenn had gone down a bit in the estimation of some producers, and he was a kind of fella with long

hair. I said —You'll have to cut your hair. The guy just came out of the navy. If you had gone through the navy during the war with your hair like that, they'd have hanged you by it. You'll have to get a crew hair cut. —Nobody'll know who I am. I said —That's fine. They all know who you are now and it doesn't do you any good. Eleanor Parker looks off into the wings and you wink. Is that Glenn Ford? So they know you with long hair. Cut your hair. and the producer said —Don't go too far! We sat round like we were in the dentist's office and gave Glenn Ford whisky. He drank almost a whole quart. And every time we cut his hair he would say —Stop. He would go and look in the mirror, and we'd try to turn the mirror away from him. And you know it took almost three hours to cut his hair? *Did you like the film?*

Yes. I thought it was quite a good film. I found a piece of music about three years before I did *Blackboard Jungle*. Driving home late at night from a poker game I heard this piece of music on one of those small stations and the rhythm interested me very much. I didn't remember its name. When I was planning to write *Blackboard Jungle* I asked the music store if they could get it for me. They finally came up with the record: "Rock Around The Clock". So six to eight hours a day while I wrote the script I played this record in the office. I felt that this record was indicative of young people's attitudes. When we began to shoot the film I played this record quite often on the stage through the dialogue so that the body movements would have this feeling, then dubbed some of the dialogue later.

The company didn't want to spend much money on the music, so I said —Why don't we just do it with records? The head of the music department said —Look. We can buy all the rights for the movie for \$5,000 and we could own the record for 7,500, but you're throwing away 2,500 because this stuff will never catch on. But when the picture came out the fellow who owned the record sold over a million in four months.

There were many pictures about juvenile delinquency immediately following this one, because of its success. But I started off to make a picture about a teacher, not about juvenile delinquency at all. If you see the picture again, watch how the spokes of the wheel keep on coming back to what the teacher is about. Can this human being meet the situation he is faced with? He can go to a better place, and probably do well, but is he willing to do that, not just on the basis of whether morally he's right or wrong, but whether he can meet the challenge for his own sake? Most of the films that followed, about kids running around hitting each other with chains didn't mean anything because they didn't have an intrinsically worthwhile core. *Blackboard Jungle* wasn't just a picture about violence. The most violent thing in it was the music.

## The Last Hunt

I was interested in making a western but I didn't want to make the one about the fella who could draw faster than the other fella. Not that there's anything wrong with that, but I felt that I didn't know enough about the technique of making westerns. This particular story was not in the general category of a western because it dealt with a period of American history in which men who came West slaughtered some two to three million buffalo in a period of ten to twelve years just for the hide, just for greed. The meat was left to rot. They decimated whatever possibility the American Indian had of survival because the Indian lived almost entirely off the buffalo.



This brought about a change in our wild-life laws.

Peck wanted to play one role and Monty Clift was to play the young killer. But M.G.M. had made a picture with Bob Taylor and the other fella: *All The Brothers Were Valiant*. And they said —These two fellows together, they're sensational but we've got a twist for you. We'll have the killer play the hero and the hero play the villain. So they had this other fellow play the hero. Bob Taylor was very good in that picture, but the public wouldn't accept him as a villain at that time.

We went up to South Dakota where the largest herd —about three thousand—remains. It's a law now: you cannot touch a buffalo because of that slaughter. They weed out the mavericks each year, and some of the dry cows, and kill them off. They give the beef to the Sioux. We used the period when they eliminate those buffaloes. You see our actor, the camera angled over his shoulder, rifle in his hand, and the buffalo. They were for real. A foot and a half off the camera was a marksman with a .303 rifle who fired the shots you saw. They knocked off some sixty to seventy buffalo. They dropped just like *that*.

The public couldn't stand it. In England most of the scenes with the buffalo were cut out. In the States, they couldn't stand it because of their own guilt. Every father's got a rifle. —Come on son, let's go out and we'll shoot something. So they go out and they shoot, usually each other. But here it said that the rotten slaughter of these animals was a disgrace. The intention of the film was to make the public so sick that they would say that it was a crime. But they got so sick they never went to see the picture. It was a financial disaster, but if you look at it in its original form it's an interesting picture.

*After all the shooting of the buffalo, you are robbed of the gunfight you expect.*

That's right. I guess it broke the rule, and here I learned something very valuable: when you deal with a subject in films that is traditional, don't deny it to the public, because the western and its gun-play is like a musical—it's

fantasy and it should be kept as such. If you want to do the real thing, the way the west really was, do it on a small budget, and don't expect any miracles.

*Do you feel sorry for the Robert Taylor character towards the end of the film?*

Yes. I can't say whether I regarded him as good or bad. I regarded him as a human being who couldn't find himself. All his killings brought him nothing. There was no answer for him. Not even the glory of a showdown. He just froze to death like a fossil, almost like the buffalo.

## Something of Value

A best-seller, and when I got to Africa, they got hysterical laughing at me. They were laughing at the novelist and at me for even coming near Kenya with the book. It was trash. Eventually, I got what I thought was rather a good script, but this was a subject that I don't think anyone in the world wanted to know about. At the time, they didn't care about it. Of course, it's all come true now, it is just as we talked about it: unless black and white were going to be partners, the white man would have to get out. That's what I tried to say in the film. I liked Sidney Poitier in it, and Rock Hudson was fine.

I had done a lot of research. One of the things I read in 1907 predicted the problems they would have in Kenya if they were not careful. That book was written by Winston Churchill, and here we were around 1956, when I made the film. So I wrote a letter to Mr. Churchill and asked if he could not do a foreword quote his own words in relation to today. Finally he said, miracle of miracles —Very well. And he wrote something down on a page. We sent a cameraman to his home to photograph him. We took it up to the preview. At that time in M.G.M., they had fourteen guys sitting around a table, and one guy would say —I didn't like the music in the sixth reel. And another would say —My dentist hates it. And someone said —What's this crap with the

*Still: Glenn Ford and Vic Morrow in The Blackboard Jungle.*

Churchill thing? Who in hell knows who Winston Churchill is? It kills the picture dead. Some goddam Englishman there talking. . . So they took the thing and cut it right out. I think he swore never to participate in another movie as long as he lived; I don't think he ever did.

*In the first part of the film, the shots of the house tend to be from very low angles, and as the first raid draws near, they get lower and lower.*

Yes, that was intentional. I tried to make as many images as I could tie up with the raid on the house. It was quite an obvious piece of symbolism. When the raid has taken place, the Sidney Poitier character sees himself in a mirror in the house. He doesn't smash the mirror as a wilful wanton act of breaking something, but he doesn't like his own image at that moment, so he "breaks" it. He doesn't want to look at himself out of a sense of guilt.

He was in the middle area between those who were rebellious Africans and the conservative hide-bound Caucasians. He had the neurotic impulses of a man caught between political and personal loyalties. Poitier had never been to Africa, and they knew he was not an African by the way he walked. I introduced him to the Mau Mau through Captain Ian Henderson, who had actually arranged for that war to end over two years before it did. He had brought in General China and his men with their families: there were thousands. And in the morning, one of the soldiers got nervous: a man went outside the circumscribed area and got shot. It took two more years for that war to end. We used that incident in the picture. Captain Henderson took us to a Mau Mau ceremony, and Poitier understood just how far the negro in America had come from this source. He realised that if there was ever to be any advancement of any consequence, it had to come through education. One basic need of the negro in the United States or anywhere else is education.

I wanted to show the African was really the white man's burden, literally and physically. So I had Rock Hudson carry Sidney. The idea of the white man carrying the negro was resented a great deal in many states in the U.S.A.

## Brothers Karamazov

Russia wanted me to make the picture in the Soviet Union but "New York" said that that would make it a Communist movie. So I said —Dostoevsky was a long time before this. How can I create Russia in a back lot? I'll have to make everything at night or in interiors. It's impossible —You'll make it, and stay away from those people.

There were some good things in that picture, some bad. But in doing that picture I learned an important thing about the treatment of a classic: if I'm going to do it, I must find the images in order to do the story. Not that many other people will have read the book and appreciate what I am trying to retain, because most people don't remember or have a different visualisation of it. But I learned that the play, the novel, because they are the written or spoken word, deal with the intellect first: the first response is intellectual. If they are put together properly, your second reaction will probably be emotional. I found out in this picture (at least for me, I don't know if anyone else believes this) that precisely the opposite happens in a film, because the film deals with images and the first reaction to images is emotional. If the images all add up to something worthwhile, you may get an intellectual response as well. So I say to myself —How do I find the images to express these words? All pictures talk too much, especially mine. Images are an international language if they are





properly assembled and created, so that people all over the world, can understand these images, can communicate.

*You devised the cross lighting in colour in The Brothers Karamazov?*

Yes, it began there.

*Did you use the colours symbolically, because they are pretty primary?*

They were used separately in what we thought those colours represented to us. We even made some tests beforehand to see if, when we saw the colour on the screen, those colours would still give us what we felt was the effect. Not everyone liked those colours when they did see them. They thought they were rather pretentious or obtrusive. But I noticed that afterwards many other people began to do it. Of course, they did it better than we did.

## Williams Movies

They're both pretty good movies, but it's difficult for me to dramatise Tennessee Williams because he writes purely for the stage. I think he's a brilliant writer, but to use all of his words in a film is not practical.

*D'you know he made something like \$1,700,000 on Cat on a Hot Tin Roof?* And then what did he say? —Oh, look what they did to my play. They butchered me! Of course, we consulted with him all the time. He knew every step of the way just what we were going to do.

*You seem very concerned in your films with the relationship between people's private lives and their public behaviour.*

I feel that people are at odds in their professional and private lives. They are not really facing themselves in either one. Especially in their public lives, as they have an image of themselves which they must project.

*This appeared in the scene in Something of Value where Hudson rejects Dana Wynter. He feels dirty because of what he has to do.*

That's right, and it's also true in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* in a scene which was not in the play, which took place between the father and the son in the basement.

*You probably didn't have the chance to do too much to the Williams plays.*

Not too much. In *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, I tried to keep all of the intentions and most of the dialogue. I added a few scenes. I didn't feel the subject of latent or even overt homosexuality was necessary for this particular story. Also, you have a conditioned audience in a theatre, but if you go to the movies and there's a man on the screen who keeps saying, no, he doesn't want to go to bed with Elizabeth Taylor, then the audience will begin to whistle and hoot. They can't identify with the hero because they do want to go to bed with her. But if Paul Newman was going to say —No, honey, I'm thinking about Skipper, they'd laugh you out of the theatre. I had to dramatize that Brick rejects Maggie, not because he is incapable of loving her, but because he holds her responsible for Skipper's death.

Tennessee was very happy with all of this on the telephone. We had never met, and I had never seen the play.

*Sweet Bird* I didn't want to do. While I thought it was a very good play, I felt that time had passed, that there were too many imitations of his work. So many of his pieces had been done and were even being brought back and were playing at the same time.

*In Sweet Bird of Youth, you were using a much simpler camera style than in Cat, with the camera usually level.*

I was able to. First of all, I had changes of scene in *Sweet Bird*. In *Cat*, I had one set and I was determined not to break through and

smash Williams' play. He had a proscenium and I hadn't and didn't want a proscenium, but I tried to give the feeling that it was like a set. So we had one major set: there was a bedroom floor, a ground floor and a basement.

I had to move because of the vast amount of dialogue. In *Sweet Bird*, I could chop out reams of dialogue and supplant it with an image, so I could use a much simpler camera technique. In *Cat*, I knew they couldn't just listen to the dialogue.

I was faced with quite a lot of situations where many people were on scene simultaneously, and I didn't want them to distract from the focal point. I felt it was perfectly all right for me just to cut them out with light, one at a time and bring them in out of the darkness. I tried to use it as a technique without having to make many exits and entrances.

Then there's the business of sound recording. Everybody is talking at once, and you can hear it clearly on the stage, but it comes out a jumble when recorded. A man said —Mr. Brooks, this microphone has no brain. You put it there and five people talk: that's what the microphone hears. You're in a room and the brain tunes out three of four people. Same thing applies to your eye and the camera. On the stage, you cut yourself. People are there all the time, but you look at this one, or are directed to look at that one. In the film you force the eye to see what you wish it to see.

*Why did you have the prologue on the athletic track?*

There's a long, long speech in the play describing how he broke his leg and I was trying to get away from having a long speech about how a fellow broke his leg. I wanted to show him, not at the height of his career, but in an empty stadium where he was searching for something, so that you only had a conditioning beforehand to say that there's something disturbing this fellow. There's a dream of past glory, but he isn't that good any more.

Instead of somebody constantly pulling the crutch out from under Brick, I had him tortured by having him come down the stairs even without the crutch. I had him go down to the basement, the lowest part of the house, where I wanted the relationship between the father and the son to open up, so that it would build, to be able to bring them up to the next level. Even the exterior of the house was a set.

*Why did you use the little tinkling piano tune on the gramophone in the basement?*

The father was a tough, realistic human being, but when he learns about his own death, when he has to face what is coming to him, he realises that it's all been pretty empty anyway. I wanted to put something in musically that would create an emotional reaction to this man's past for the scene where the boy comes down. As he wanders around, he puts the record on and the old tune would prepare the audience emotionally, without them even understanding why they were beginning to say —What about this old man? Didn't he ever have anything he really liked as a child? Was he just quarried, wasn't he born? Was he always a rich man? I tried to prepare for a past of his own. He was surrounded with it there in all his possessions.

*In Sweet Bird, the lighting is very smooth, warm and soft. Why did you choose that, particularly for the bedroom set?*

Well, the Princess is kind of a romantic figure. She may be realistic in her business life, but she's very unrealistic in her personal life. It's a very harsh picture, and I didn't see why the photography had to be as harsh as the content. I thought —Here's this harsh picture which has to do with hashish, with castration, bastardy, vicious politics and I don't know what. And I

*Still: Geraldine Page and Paul Newman in Sweet Bird of Youth.*

wanted everything to be soft and beautifully coloured. This figure sees everything as soft, and wants it to be that way.

*Was it entirely box office coincidence that Newman turned up again as the Williams hero?*

No. He was in the play and was signed for it long before I got near it. But I chose Paul specifically for *Cat*, because I could put the camera on him for minutes: in many, many scenes he didn't have to say anything and I could get an interesting personality who could think something, and I could see it in the camera. He was not a big star then.

*Was the flashback method yours in Sweet Bird?* Yes. I wanted more. It was supposed to be done with cuts, but they said —They want to know where you are and what's happening. Let's not get arty.

*Did you want to make it in CinemaScope?*

I never want to make anything in CinemaScope, but it's no use any more. I've given up the battle. I made *Elmer Gantry* in the regular three by four size and they go and project it wrongly. What's the use of composing a close shot of someone if all you get is his mouth on the screen? You can't beat the rap. Then, of course, they have created with the new Panavision lens the possibility of seeing something without distortion, and it's a big improvement on what CinemaScope used to be. But I don't find it conducive to compose the scene well, unless you have a mass scene. If you're sitting and I'm standing, and I want a close shot, I can't do it unless I put the camera way down below to hold my height and your height. If I get down below, I've got to put in a ceiling piece or I have to move farther off. But supposing I want to be close, we have to do it with me leaning over. Well that's not right. It's forcing the scene, you see. People are made to stand up, but I can't get them standing up. But when it came to those scenes in *Sweet Bird* with dual images, I had no problems. I felt thankful for the process.

I had a different ending for *Sweet Bird*, but they wouldn't let me use it. What I wanted Chance Wayne to do was this. No man says —Feel sorry for me because I have this little bit of evil; there's a little bit of evil in every one of you. No man waits to be castrated. He might think intellectually that he is going to be, but he doesn't stand and wait for it. So I wanted him to do something more: to go and look for the trouble. But M.G.M. felt it was bad enough they were doing the picture.

He goes to the house, calling for the girl. The brother shows up with the boys and they drag him over to the car. They begin to destroy him. You don't have to see the castration, but first they destroy his looks, and then they go to work on him. You leave the scene right there. You dissolve, in my other ending, straight to the ferry. At the beginning of the picture you saw the ferry as they arrive. They have to leave by the same ferry. The Princess and Lucy are leaving in the car and they stop for a moment. Once they're on the ferry boat, they're out of that town. They're very relieved, and they light cigarettes. The boat slows down, toots its horn, pulls away a little bit to cross over, because passing is a garbage scow. On that scow is Chance Wayne. That's all. Not another word is said, because at the beginning of the picture, the old man said to his daughter —You want him to leave this town on a garbage scow? But M.G.M. said —Hey! You can't do that. He came for the girl. He doesn't get the girl. So they said —We'll let you shoot it after we've had the preview, and, of course, they never did.





## Elmer Gantry

I had complete control on *Elmer Gantry*. I made it for United Artists because no other studio would make it. In *Elmer Gantry*, we just had to change a couple of little scenes because of problems with censors. You saw most of the picture here. I think they made a few cuts, but one thing which they had unfortunately to cut everywhere was at the end, after the fire when the newspaperman is left and he says to Gantry —See you around, brother. And Gantry says —See you around, and walks off. The camera follows him, and that's the end of the picture. As it was originally shot, the newspaperman says —See you around, brother. And Gantry turns round and says —I'll see you in hell brother. Because he knew where he was going.

All the various censor boards said —You can't do that. It shows that the man has not been reformed. I said —But the point is that he knows he has not been reformed, he knows he's no good as a preacher. That's his only reformation: he refuses to be a preacher. He's going back to being a drifter, a salesman, a teller of dirty stories. That's what he ought to be, and he's great at that, but he should not victimise these other people. Sell them a lousy bargain or a dirty stove or cheat them at cards, but don't cheat them at this thing that they think is really going to save them. But I couldn't do it. That's one of the compromises. There were a couple of others. But it's the first movie made in America about this subject which is not a spectacle. It's important because the next one who tries to make such a picture will at least have the door open so he can do something better than *Gantry*, and treat the subject a little more seriously.

*The shot at the end from which Gantry walks out closes down on an ambulance with a cross. Are you implying that this is just one kind of cross, one kind of help? Is it like Crisis, where everyone calls for a doctor when hurt?*

Yes. The truth of the matter is that I wanted to do more but I settled for that. Had the last line been in correctly, it would have had much more significance —See you in hell, brother. There is

a need in all of us for some kind of help. Some of us find it in Christ, some in a bank in a woman or in a man; it doesn't make any difference where you find it. If we have it when we need it, that's the only important thing. It is when we say there is only one answer for you, my answer, that we're in trouble. Beware of fellows who say —There's only one way for me to save you.

*Were you pointing out the link between revivalism and conservatism? That revivalism which seems on paper a progressive attitude to religion is extremely conservative?*

That's the importance of the scene where Gantry tries to force the fellow into —Do you believe the Bible is a lie? He will either accept it all or he will accept none: that's the Fundamentalist point of view. On that basis, the man will burn in hell, which is a conservative point of view. That's the power of it, in fact, saying —Here is the book and it means this word for word and comma for comma, as I tell it to you. The fact that there are two thousand interpretations has nothing to do with it.

*Quite often in Elmer Gantry you seem to be suggesting that revivalism was the fore-runner of McCarthyism.*

What I meant there was that it was used by reactionary forces, as they have always been used. Billy Sunday was used this way. Every thirty years, there's a new generation of people who haven't caught the spark yet. They suddenly need to come into a group of mass hypnotism, of mass seeking for their problems. What they were seeking, I didn't say, but it was the use made of these people's seeking that bothered me; Bacon taught me more about that in my school days than anyone else.

*When Elmer leads the people to the brothel, it's not really social progress, it's the will to destroy. Yes, it's a lynching really, and they have to have some force to say —Let's beat that fellow and we'll all feel better. It's precisely that.*

*Why did you plant the dropped cigarette so early in the miracle sequence rather than doing it afterwards, separately?*

Old movie technique. I didn't want them to sit there for one second. The main thing is to have

the old fellow regain his hearing. But I wanted both things working at the same time, just like the villain's tying the guy on the track, the hero's coming and the train's coming. I didn't want them to say —Save him, that's all that matters. I wanted them to say —There's something wrong here. There's something awful going to happen.

*Did you want to establish any causal connection between the miracle and the destruction?*

No. The miracle is something we're always looking for. Somewhere, somehow we need it: we'll hope for the miracle. But when we get the miracle, the thing which is always about to happen to us, disaster or some kind of crisis, occurs a moment later. Let that cut into the text specifically, that's the point. I wanted the audience to say —Oh, we've got the fire. Now she says —God is here. There's no need to be frightened or panic. But they panic, they tear each other to pieces. Then she knows she's lost.

*So that the congregation who panic are acting more sensibly than she is?*

Of course. You can't think about what's good for the world; you act. You've seen fifteen movies in the past five years, where the Lord Jesus carried the Cross up to Calvary, and people let him pass weeping. They see that he's really a holy figure. They finally nail him up there. Who helps Him? Does any person lend a hand? Who are all these people who say they believe? You can see them crying: they believe. They believe, and they don't do a thing. It takes two hundred years for them to do something. We see them by the thousand as the camera pans by, their eyes filled with tears and hope and knowledge and desperation, but nobody raises a hand. The only one who really felt anything was Barabbas, I guess.

*The cutting in Elmer Gantry is used as a motif. Burt Lancaster always walks out of the frame before you cut. This is used in the last shot. Was it a conscious device?*

Yes. I had decided that in almost all instances, wherever it was physically possible, never let this man, who was the cotton thread with which the piece was embroidered, out of sight of the camera, so that everything was seen virtually from his point of view. I would not cut when he was coming toward me to do something. He had to come right by and sometimes went right out of focus as he came towards us, because you can't hold focus after a while. But that didn't disturb me.

*You used the concealed lighting techniques from Karamazov even more. Many of the close-ups, particularly of Lancaster telling stories, although one doesn't notice, are against a completely blacked-out background.*

That's right. In this day of large screens, my biggest problem is the elimination of space, not the inclusion of space. I didn't want anything to distract you from him. I wanted you to watch him, to look inside the man, so by means of lighting, I dropped out the colour around him quite often, so that it was almost a cameo.

*It gives a feeling of secrecy. After a time, you become worried, perhaps unconsciously, about where the light is coming from and what it's revealing.*

There was a secret, and a secret within a secret, so that it peels off the character until finally he's revealed, until the final scene he's in bright daylight.

*Transcribed from tape-recorded interviews with Ian Cameron, Mark Shivas, Paul Mayersberg and V. F. Perkins during the preparation of Lord Jim, and corrected afterwards by Mr. Brooks.*



# Conservative Idealist

Richard Brooks is an idealist, but a conservative idealist. He believes in "the indomitable spirit of man". He believes that goodness can prevail over evil, that waste lands can be made fertile. Brooks is conservative, not in the sense of being right wing politically (he is nothing if not a liberal), but in the sense that his beliefs are reasoned not inspired. His attitudes are evolutionary and not utopian.

*Elmer Gantry*, assuredly his most brilliant film (I haven't yet seen *Lord Jim*), is about blind faith and its social, moral and even economic dangers. For Brooks, if an attitude to life has a commercial potential it is suspect. Salesmanship is one of the subjects of *Elmer Gantry*. The revivalist's heaven is a utopia for sale like a washing machine or a vacuum cleaner. Heine once wrote: "When books are burned, people are burned". Brooks might argue: "When ideas are sold, people are sold". "For Sale" is the theme of *Deadline U.S.A.* in which a newspaper, symbol of liberty and free expression, is about to be bought out, and "For Sale" is the tag round Chance

Wayne's neck in Brooks' adaptation of *Sweet Bird of Youth*, in which Chance (Paul Newman) offers his youth for a dollar.

Brooks rejects slogans and ways of life created out of slogans, because a slogan too often represents an idea for sale. Many of the pernicious characters in his movies talk in slogans: Like Charlie (Robert Taylor) in *The Last Hunt* whose simple philosophy is "kill or be killed", or Boss Finley (Ed Begley) in *Sweet Bird of Youth* or Big Daddy (Burl Ives) in *Cat On a Hot Tin Roof*, or like the intellectual leader of Mau Mau in *Something of Value* who maintains that blood must be shed if Africa is to be free of white domination. While most of Brooks' slogan salesmen are materially acquisitive and potentially fascist, slogans themselves need not be. Many valuable movements in human history have been dramatised and popularised in slogans. One would object to the slogan "Keep Britain White", but one might approve of the slogan "Ban The Bomb". I have never seen a film of

Brooks' on the subject of a slogan of which he approves. He is emotionally on the side of change in human affairs, but he is instinctively anti-revolutionary and this is the main aspect of his conservatism.

Many of Brooks' characters represent clear points of view. Sometimes they are in danger of symbolising an attitude for the purposes of the script. It is ironic that his suspicious concern with slogans and inflexible attitudes should trap him into creating characters that show little or no development in the course of the action. Dadier, the teacher (Glen Ford) in *The Blackboard Jungle* becomes more convinced of his vocation as a teacher as the film progresses. His doubts make up some of the film's drama, but they are decisively and predictably overcome. Similarly, in *Something of Value*, Peter (Rock Hudson) becomes increasingly certain of his view about the position of white men in Africa, that they must finally relinquish the role of masters and become allies. Brooks' characters, are not, however, unreal or two-dimensional. They simply tend to be unchanging. It is part of Brooks' talent to make such characters believable people. Until *Elmer Gantry*, his less sympathetic characters are people who know where they're going and what they want from life, his heroes are men who believe they're going somewhere and who know what they don't want.

In his presentation of human problems Brooks has an allegoric style but it is far from flat and undramatic. In *Something of Value* the allegory comes out of the whole story, which is as much past historical background as it is action in the present. Compare *Something of Value* with Stanley Kramer's *The Defiant Ones* as a film about race relations. In Kramer's picture, the central situation of a negro convict handcuffed to a white convict is so artificially set up, depending on the accident of the handcuffs, that it's laughable. In *Something of Value*, after Kymani (Sidney Poitier) has run away like a frightened animal only to have his foot caught in an animal trap the scene in which Peter bears the negro on his back is a dramatisation of the human irony of the "white man's burden". The symbolism of this scene becomes organic as the movie develops. In Kramer's picture the device of the handcuffs is a starting point for a whole series of accidents and chance encounters. To treat race prejudice within a formal structure of accidents is profoundly dishonest because the origin of race prejudice is anything but





accidental. Kramer's form is incompatible with his alleged "liberal" point of view. *Something of Value* is an honest film in its respect for the subject (history rather than story) and, by implication, in its respect for the intelligence and feelings and knowledge of the audience. The setting is Kenya where there are negroes and wild animals: the white man goes on safari to hunt animals one day and gets up a posse to hunt negroes the next. The picture has a concept of Africa as a place. Brooks has sought out the common denominator in negro and white attitudes to their country—the land itself, the farms, the crops, the days, the nights, the seasons, the skies, and above all the feeling of home.

Peter, the white man, whose home is in Africa, the black man's country, is the same character as Dadier in *The Blackboard Jungle* whose "home" as a teacher is the classroom from which he is in constant danger of being exiled by the boys, the "natives". Both men have their personal lives threatened by the terrorism of the "natives". The love scenes in *Something of Value* and *Blackboard Jungle* are not personal "interludes" in the "social" action, but express the difficulty of loving in a world of hate, of being reasonable in a world of passion: Dana Wynter and Rock Hudson lying in a ploughed field close to the land which ironically brings

them together and keeps them apart, and Glenn Ford with his pregnant wife, Anne Francis, in hospital where the successful birth of their child is threatened by the "bad kids" at school. In these scenes, love which is personal is threatened by hate which is collective.

The idea of the individual and the group, the singular and the plural, is at the heart of *The Blackboard Jungle*. At the beginning of the movie, the classroom is just a sea of faces to Dadier. Little by little, as he learns their names, the kids become individuals. The teacher, already an individual, teaches his class to bring out the individuality of its members. Because they are in some cases backward kids or simply unwilling to pay attention, Dadier's main problem is in communicating with them. He comes to realise that it is not what you teach that is important, but how you teach it. This takes us to the core of Brooks' method and preoccupations as a film maker. Dadier is like Brooks against slogans, against judgments in the plural. He is far from reactionary, but he is not revolutionary. He wants to remove the bad elements from the old system (two psychopathic boys are finally revealed to be at the root of the major violence and prejudice in the class) rather than implement a new system. It is perhaps significant that in representing Brooks' values he eventually

"reaches" the boys through a film show.

Elmer Gantry is also about reaching people, not by reason but through faith. Sister Sharon (Jean Simmons) shows the heaven, Elmer (Burt Lancaster) shows them hell. Sharon, for all her goodness puts herself beyond the reach of human beings. When she performs the "miracle" of making a deaf man hear again, she unwittingly puts herself on a different plane from her flock. Elmer is always of the people, though not necessarily for them: the reverse of Sharon. The people understand Elmer, but they idolise Sharon. In the final judgment fire, Sharon dies because no one, in the mad rush to escape, bothers to help her. The miracle she has just performed might as well never have existed. She is above humanity and therefore beyond human help, which as a woman she desperately needs: the only time Sharon does receive help it's from Elmer, when he makes love to her. The last shot of the cross on the side of the ambulance after the fire poses the question wooden cross or Red Cross—when you're in trouble which one would you want first? Elmer's last line (which has been cut

*Stills: Opposite page: The Brothers Kara mazon, Lee J. Cobb and Maria Schell. This page: Paul Newman and Burl Ives in Cat on a Hot Tin Roof (the scene in the cellar).*





from some copies of the film) is Brooks' answer: "See you in hell, brother!"

The irony in *Elmer Gantry* is that Sister Sharon, whatever her attitude to life, genuinely has a vocation to teach and help people. Elmer has the talent without the sense of vocation. Elmer and Sharon are complex variations on the character of Dadier in *The Blackboard Jungle*. So too is Jim (Arthur Kennedy) the journalist of the Zenith newspaper who follows the Revivalists around to get a true picture of the movement: he has a vocation as a newspaperman and is perhaps an extension of the Editor (Humphrey Bogart) in *Deadline U.S.A.*

Journalism, writing, literature are important to Brooks: he is arguably the best screenwriter in America. One of his particular skills lies in adapting for the screen novels (*The Brothers Karamazov*, *Elmer Gantry*, and now *Lord Jim*), and plays (*Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *The Catered Affair*, and *Sweet Bird of Youth*, in my view the best adaptation of a Williams' play). His earlier films seem more like "filmed screenplays" than motion pictures. But Brooks has changed. From *The Brothers Karamazov* onwards he has made a conscious effort to develop a visual style, or more precisely, since Brooks would not look at it that way, to give images the importance he previously endowed upon words. In this respect, *The Brothers Karamazov* is an interesting movie, the turning point in Brooks' development. He uses colour in *Karamazov* to symbolise certain states of mind, leaving the dialogue to cope with the ideas. The result is a strange split between words and images. The colours stand out like shouted phrases or subtitles. The mistake he made was to use images in a literary way. This is also an element of Brooks' conservatism: the problem of giving up the old way of doing things.

*The Brothers Karamazov* was a highly schematised movie, each of the characters standing for an attitude to life. Similarly, the colours stood for precise emotions. The photography of *Elmer Gantry* was a refinement of the colour of *Karamazov* (both movies were shot by John Alton), but it was also a refinement of structure. Perhaps *Elmer Gantry* was the first picture in which Brooks totally solved the problem of aligning personality to viewpoint (without a dangerous rigidity) when he introduced the character of the journalist, who does represent a viewpoint but also acts as commentator and questioner, thereby taking the burden of argument from the central characters. This leaves Elmer and Sharon in the scheme of the film free to contradict themselves. Conrad uses a narrator in *Lord Jim* and I suspect that Brooks will retain this character in his film. It is interesting to

note that the figure of the narrator who recurs in Conrad's novels was a device to pull the action back into the author's perspective: this is particularly important since Conrad was politically a very conservative man who nonetheless dealt in many of his novels with revolutionary extremism. Even if in *Elmer Gantry* Brooks achieved a successfully balanced synthesis of words and images, he still speaks in interviews of "writing with the camera". One reason is, I think, that Brooks sees "writing" as the chief artistic function.

In *The Blackboard Jungle*, the classroom is the theatre of teaching. In *Elmer Gantry*, the tent where the Revivalist meetings are held is a platform, another's theatre. The newspaper office becomes a forum for ideas. In each case what interests Brooks is the coming together of the functions of writing and teaching. In *Elmer Gantry*, Sharon teaches from what has been written (in the Bible) and the journalist writes from what is being taught. Like the kids in the classroom, the audience at the Revivalist meetings raise their hands to ask questions or beg for help. The common question is "Please teacher. . ." In *Crisis*, Brooks' first movie, the cry was "please doctor". A Doctor (Cary Grant) is forced at gunpoint to operate on a Dictator of a small Latin American country (Jose Ferrer), whose views he despises. The doctor tries to help one man at a time, the dictator tries to help thousands: the singular and the plural. For Brooks, true help is singular, helping people in the plural is worthless. Dadier can only reach his class when he feels he knows them as individuals. The irony of Sister Sharon's four hundred conversions in a day is that they don't stick: as the janitor says as he's clearing up the tent after a meeting "Man, I've been converted three times". Personal contact, personal friendship, personal love: these are what count in the development of man. In *Sweet Bird of Youth* Alexandra del Lago (Geraldine Page) fails to make permanent human contact because her aim as a movie star is to make contact with and be loved by millions. When she really needs help she turns to Chance Wayne, but when she learns her come-back has been a success she throws "him" over for "them".

For Dadier the teacher, as for Gantry the orator or Alexandra del Lago the actress, the power of words is primary. The spoken word is the written word in action. Brooks' belief in the concept of The Word is Christian. So are certain other aspects of his work. For example, I can't help feeling that Brooks sees the world divided into the teachers and the taught, the leaders and the followers. The kids in *The Blackboard Jungle*, the flock in *Elmer Gantry*, the family in *Karamazov* are all seen as lost souls: Dadier, Sharon and

Alyosha Karamazov are the teachers, those who try to light the way.

This ultimately comes down to a personal interpretation of the phrase "Love One Another": often expressed by Brooks in terms of one man's feeling of responsibility towards another. In *The Last Hunt*, Sandy (Stewart Granger) and Charlie (Robert Taylor) become partners in a buffalo hunting expedition, which is really a killing expedition. The movie is a sickening orgy of indiscriminate killing: white, Indians, animals, anything that moves. Charlie is a pathological killer: "I've never known a gun to wear a man before". Sandy knows that sooner or later he will have to fight Charlie in a gunfight and that in all probability he will lose. Yet he stays with him and returns to him even when he has an easy way out. The question is why does Sandy stick with Charlie? Sandy himself doesn't say or even know why, but we can infer that there is something in him that makes him feel responsible for Charlie even though "understanding him ain't gonna stop him from killing". Sandy fails to communicate with Charlie in the end but he must keep trying. This patience, like Dadier's is a Christian virtue because it comes from an inexplicable feeling of responsibility which is not guilt. Sandy's action's are dictated by his belief that Charlie, the lost soul, can be saved.

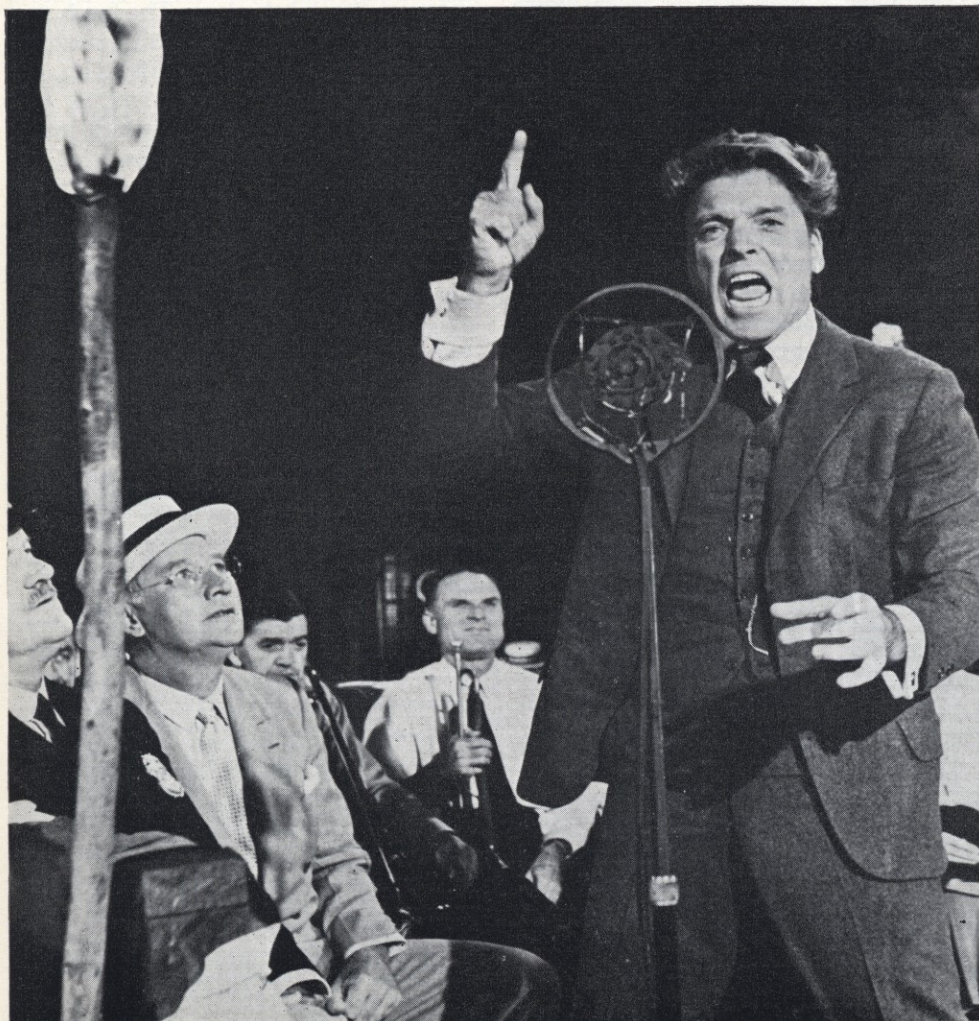
"Keep trying" is almost the essence of Brooks' philosophy, it's man's true vocation in life, in whatever environment he finds himself. In the last sequence of *Something of Value* Peter finds himself carrying Kymani's baby son on his shoulders as he once carried Kymani. This does not imply that he is back where he started, but that he is determined to start again. Similarly, Chance Wayne's return to his home town in *Sweet Bird of Youth* is an attempt to begin again. However, Chance's life is endangered by the corrupted form of "keep trying" which consists of a constant clutching at circumstances and people who might represent the "big break". *Elmer Gantry* describes the hero's attempt to do something in life, to find a direction for his extraordinary energies. He fails, he fails completely, and yet no movie I can think of has a greater feeling of hope for the future. When Elmer the lost soul walks out of shot for the last time there is more feeling of hope on the screen than there is in a hundred inspirational movies, or more pertinently perhaps, a greater feeling of hope than there was in Sister Sharon's performance of a miracle. It is not hard to guess what Brooks will make of Conrad's story of a man who is granted a second chance in life.

Paul Mayersberg





## Two Christian Films



*Elmer Gantry* and *The Brothers Karamazov* both move within a Christian frame of reference. This article is primarily concerned with their attitudes to Christianity, in which *Elmer Gantry* is exactly complemented by its predecessor. To say that Brooks' *The Brothers Karamazov* isn't Dostoevsky's is like saying that Spike Milligan's "Oblomov" isn't Goncharov's. Why should it be? There's room for both. One actor's Hamlet isn't another's, and the public is not poorer but richer for the second.

Each Hamlet illuminates the other, not least by contradicting it, and Brooks' story is the negation of Dostoevsky's. Only the characters and the events remain. Father Karamazov (Lee J. Cobb), with his lustfulness and avarice, ceases to be Dostoevsky's "fallen humanity" and becomes an "amoral, i.e. egoistic, life force"—an amoral conception not to be found in Christianity, where life and good are one (in God), where amorality is inconceivable, and fleshly passion usually suspect of Satanism.

It isn't Dostoevsky's inversions of conventional morality that Brooks betrays. The prostitute (Maria Schell) proves herself a loyal lover, the respectable girl (Claire Bloom), jilted, becomes callous and spiteful, through pride, the diabolical sin, rather than love. But these "reversals" become schematised, rationalised and in a sense, secularised, when freed, in particular, from the visit to the cell of the *starez*, Zosima and, in general, from Dostoevsky's feverish mixture of caricature of sly ironies and pseudo-innocences of style, his *furor theologicus*. In Brooks' "interpretation" a firm, hard visual style replaces all the feverishness, the cunning of Dostoevsky's prose. Theological mysteriousness, is dissipated in favour of a set of calculations in which purity of intention, as well as consequence, has value, but in the emotional key of humanist decency.

In Brooks' adaptation, pious Alyosha (William Shatner) fades somewhat. Dmitri (Yul Brynner) perpetuates his father's passion—one egoism against another makes him the "natural" rival and murderer. Ivan (Richard Basehart), the intellectual agnostic, refuses to believe in his guilt. His detective work nearly succeeds in clearing Dimitri. He is foiled, first, when Smerdyakov (Albert Salmi), the pious mental defective, hangs himself rather than be brought to trial, and again when Katya lies at the trial. Finally he organises Dmitri's rescue from deportation to Siberia—an illegal, anarchistic action whose morality is underwritten by Alyosha, to

*Stills: Above: William Shatner and Claire Bloom in The Brothers Karamazov. Below: Burt Lancaster as Elmer Gantry.*



reassure the timid souls in the audience.

Not that agnosticism has any grounds for complacency. Ivan has to face the fact that his preaching misled Smerdyakov, who is not just "ignorance", but "human nastiness", and led first to the murder and second to the suicide. But all the Karamazovs carry some sort of blood guilt, and so does Katya for lying when Dmitri risked the death sentence.

And at the film's climax, Dmitri categorically rejects his own "right" to liberty. Fleeing from the Tsarist police, he insists on delaying to make a very fulsome apology to the son of a man whom he has wronged. To console the boy, he tells a lie (turning also on the relation of boy, father and "life-force"). The boy may be dying, perhaps less through chagrin than consumption, and the overtone is that Dmitri believes the apology to be a *categorical imperative*, valid even if the boy dies that very second and if he himself were to rot his life away in Siberia.

His apology is, in a sense, a compromise between Ivan's activism and Alyosha's Dostoevskian submissiveness to atonement. But it is essentially a humanitarian, purposive act—not least because of Brooks' *dramatic* rather than mystic style. And even Alyosha is delighted at Dmitri's escape, for atonement is to be *risked* rather than *sought*. For a mass American audience geared to an optimistic, extroverted activism, Dmitri's deliberate delay is an assertion of the Dostoevskian ethos, or rather of those facets of it which Brooks feels to be valid. For an audience which knows Dostoevsky, the film appears as an assertion of American puritanism, of the Quaker spirit *against* the Russian novelist. The masochism and rage fermenting in the Dostoevskian cauldron are rejected by being located in Smerdyakov.

Brooks' film isn't Dostoevsky's novel, and is certainly less profound, less troubling in its exploration of the rich algolagnic dirt from which the conscience flowers. But it also rejects Dostoevsky's sadistic authoritarianism, his theological hysterias. It thus cuts across the novel and for me acquires the status of an almost indispensable commentary. It shows infinitely greater perceptiveness than those who speak of Dostoevsky's "profundity" without pausing to examine it, to face the nauseous shock of it.

For Brooks, Alyosha and Ivan are essentially in harmony. Brooks' own spirit seems to me nearer to Ivan's, since it is now Ivan whose materialist "activism" makes him so effectively his brother's keeper, and induces the happy end. The *starex* has found his way back into the story: Alyosha has become Dmitri's. The strength of Dmitri's fleshly passions has become a moral strength. Whether this is

humanist or Christian we cannot say, though to me Brooks' tone suggests the former, for there's no question of an after-life, either to threaten (this would have infuriated Dostoevsky) or to console the dying boy.

In *Elmer Gantry* the Christianity which Brooks criticises is not Russian but American ("Make Christianity work for you. . ."). If the carpet baggers of our era can drive coach and horses back and forth through the sexual clauses of the Hays Code, there has been virtually no modification of the passages which forbade filmmakers to portray ministers of religion in an unfavourable light (apart from Buddhists and witch-doctors who, being pagan, have no rights). Hollywood religionists crooned, boxed and climbed the highest mountains but never, never let the side down. In squarely attacking any religious "front" and in asserting the double-barrelled hypocrisy of a revivalist team, *Elmer Gantry* was a major breakthrough.

In its attitude towards Christianity and indeed towards "revivalism" in general, the film is ambiguous. The Bishop of Southwark could watch it with perfect equanimity. Paradoxically, only pharisees will take it personally. Those who dislike Wyler's "caution" may take exception to Brooks' film, with its setting back in the era of Billy Sunday and of Sister Aimee Semple Macpherson's axe-swinging march through the Red Light district, which inspires a sequence here. They may dislike the final shot, although it suggests to an old reprobate like me that Elmer is reverting to "Hallelujah, I'm a bum", and parodying his own preaching in a fine comeback of honesty that only *seems* a twisted cynicism. But the Christians with whom I've discussed it believe that, when he retrieves Sister Sharon's charred Bible he is taking, not just her memory, but her faith, "purified in the fire". They say that despite his "See you in Hell", Christian truth has triumphed in the face of its devotee's inadequacies: a favourite form of pious apologetics.

The film opposes, and allies, a classic American pair: the maverick, the hobo, the saddle-tramp in modern guise, and the sweet, hard girl, breathing middle-class complacency. Elmer hovers on the edge of faith, but his evangelism is less a way of making money and acquiring fame than of courting Sister Sharon. He's like a big boy trying to please a teasing mother. He is a rascal, but his conscious hypocrisy, not devoid of tenderness, contrasts, with her self-delusive sincerity. Her idealism is all but schizophrenia. She wants Elmer's earthly devotion and the pleasure he can offer, but she also wants her pious fame, her flock and her image of herself. Glancing up at a shooting star, she seems for a

moment to have compelled even God to serve her egoism. But God or chance, or poetic justice, punishes her: the cigar stub fires the tent, and we last see her moving through the flames, calming the crowd with the legendary serenity of saints, here very like that of utter madness. In their relationship, Elmer's conscious hypocrisy is "our" norm, a materialistic sanity. Her hubris transforms God's house into a Hell. Earlier we see Elmer earning an honest nickel stoking the furnace in a church. Heaven needs its potential Hell, but Elmer's "decent cynicism" doesn't let it loose.

In preferring Elmer to Sharon, Brooks extends the attack significantly from the cynical tactics of revivalism to the schizophrenic possibilities in Christian puritanism—when it coexists with egoism instead of expelling it. In criticising both Elmer and Sharon, Brooks' attack on American religion is pretty comprehensive. Next time one would like to see him name Moral Rearmament. But perhaps Brooks, an ex-journalist, "is" the journalist whose editor Elmer cajoles into conformist silence. In the moral maze of Christian pharasaism, Elmer, too, is blackmailed for his one good deed.

The furnace, the star, the cigar, the blackened Bible: the fire symbol serves to expound Brooks' theology. The fire is that of earthly human passion, and whatever respect Brooks pays to Christianity, his films celebrate a far deeper love for that passionate, fierce generosity which makes him—as Blake said of Milton—"of the devil's party without knowing it". In the course of an interview with Chris Wicking, Brooks remarked, "It's a pity there isn't more Christianity today. Twenty-four hours of Christianity, and there'd be a revolution. People would be crucified by the million". In this sense Brooksian Christianity is diabolical, and that, I think, is why it doesn't exist. His nostalgia for it, his dismissal of its possibilities and his criticism of its forms are those of the puritan without faith, except in what fallible man manages to make of gullible man. This tenderness and generosity inform the film. There is such moral beauty, such longing as Sister Sharon, under the bridge, gives herself to her brawny lover, such lucid pity in the shots of ailing, desperate faces sucking in new hope and strength from Elmer's "life-force", such nostalgia for faith in Elmer himself as he watches the negro congregation sing, such a sense throughout the film of human waste, pain and hope, such vitality in Brooks' fervent, almost expressionistic use of colour. . . .

Raymond Durnat



# Foreword to Lord Jim

Why take a novel written about people and times of A.D. 1900 and make a film of it 64 years later? Why *Lord Jim*? And why my involvement? Why invest three years and four months in the writing, preparation and filming? Why gather an outstanding cast, a British crew of expert technicians, more than four tons of gear and equipment and take them ten thousand miles from home to the harbours and jungles of Southeast Asia, a land beset with war, danger and 120-degree heat? Perhaps it was because we all felt that *Lord Jim* could be more than another movie. Perhaps we wanted to document a human experience inspired by the Joseph Conrad story.

What story? A tale of high adventure, romance, love? Yes, that, but it had to be more, too. I believe that to have known Conrad's writings is to have touched life.

Morton D. Zabel, literary critic and teacher, wrote about Conrad: "The plight of man, on whom life closes down inexorably, divesting him of the supports and illusory protection of friendship, social prestige or love, now emerged as the characteristic theme of his (Conrad's) books. Ibsen, Gide, James, Mann and Kafka have successfully employed the same theme. It appears in Joyce, Hemingway, Don Passos and in others—but it is doubtful if any of them achieved a more successful dramatic version of the theme than Conrad".

In one of the most illuminating books written about Conrad and his work, the Briton, Jocelyn Baines, wrote: "Fate and Destiny are forces to be mastered and conquered. Cowardice in the face of the crucial test was contained in Jim's destiny; and only by conquering his destiny could

he atone for his offence. An act of cowardice had to be expiated with the supreme act of courage".

It is my fervent hope that the movie we travelled so far and took so long to make will be true to Conrad's *Lord Jim*. To be "true", however, does not always mean to be a facsimile. It is possible to translate precisely what Conrad wrote. But this does not necessarily mean the movie would have the translucence, illumination, or even the *intention* of the novel, the written work. And it was and is our avowed purpose to create on film the *intention* of Conrad's *Lord Jim*.

Conrad wrote in a style particularly suited to the novel form. We, however, must use a filmic style suited for theatre audiences of diverse cultures, a dozen different languages (perhaps three hundred different dialects), audiences with separate levels of understanding, audiences, many of whom have never learned how to read, nor learned the thought processes that flow from the art of reading. And yet it is my dream that all peoples, of all nations, regardless of race, nationality, economic background, religious upbringing—that to all these people, the film will tell the tale of Conrad's *Lord Jim*.

There is a vast difference in spinning a tale through a book and a movie. A book is a written thing. The means of communication is words. In order for words to be understood, they must first pass through the intellect of the reader. Therefore, the primary reaction to reading a book is intellectual. If the words and ideas are skilfully and artistically put together, the secondary reaction may be emotional.

A movie is the opposite. Words, dialogue,

verbal expressions are secondary. What we remember of a movie is what we *saw*. Images. A movie deals mainly with images. The reaction to a movie, like that of music, is primarily emotional. If all the images are put together skilfully and artfully, then the secondary reaction may be intellectual.

It is necessary, therefore, to employ a translation from words to images. In any translation some things are lost and, perhaps, some are gained. It is never *exactly* the same, but, in the end, it is possible for them to be closely related, if only the intention is carried out.

Conrad wrote in one of his many brilliant prefaces:—"... fiction must be like painting, like music, like all art, the appeal of one temperament to all the other innumerable temperaments whose subtle and resistless power endows passing events with their true meaning, and creates the moral, the emotional atmosphere of the place and time". "... All art appeals primarily to the senses. ... My task which I am trying to achieve is, by the power of the written word, to make you *hear*, to make you *feel*—it is, before all, to make you *see*! That—and no more, and that is everything!"

*Hear, see, feel:* that, then, shall be the objective of this movie. In the 40 years since Conrad's death, his work has not diminished—if anything, it has grown. Perhaps with luck, perception, skill and hard work, we can make a new generation of many peoples *hear* and *feel* and *see* Conrad's *Lord Jim*.

*Still: Lord Jim. Peter O'Toole is led out of the block-house after interrogation by Eli Wallach.*





Among the several themes employed in *Lord Jim*, one in particular has stayed with me since I first read the novel in high school: the man who seeks and finds a second chance. This is a theme, a life force, common to most men. Who among us, men, women, children, the weak or the strong, the rich or the poor, the powerful or the weak, regardless of race, nationality, cultural background, religious upbringing, civilised or savage, educated or not—who among us has not begged for a second chance? Who among us has not done something of which he is ashamed? Who has not broken a code of behaviour? Who has not betrayed a weakness, which has gnawed secretly at our innards? Have we not all sought at some time or another to “set things right”—for ourselves, I mean. That is the spine of the thing. That is what makes Lord Jim Everyman.

Certainly the form of the movie is still an adventure tale. Of course there are exotic, pulsating backgrounds of ruined temples and ancient tribal customs. And romance, too. For Jim was a romantic figure who thought of himself in romantic terms, the heroic figure, the dashing knight who would one day win fame, glory, riches, and, above all, *honour*. And, when, in an early test a flaw in his character betrays him, Jim does what all of us want him to do—“make things right”.

As to the style of the movie, how shall I put it so that it is not misunderstood or evaluated improperly? I have already stated why I found it impossible to put on film the style or form of the novel. I do not believe that camera angles or methods of editing or special effects constitute a so-called style.

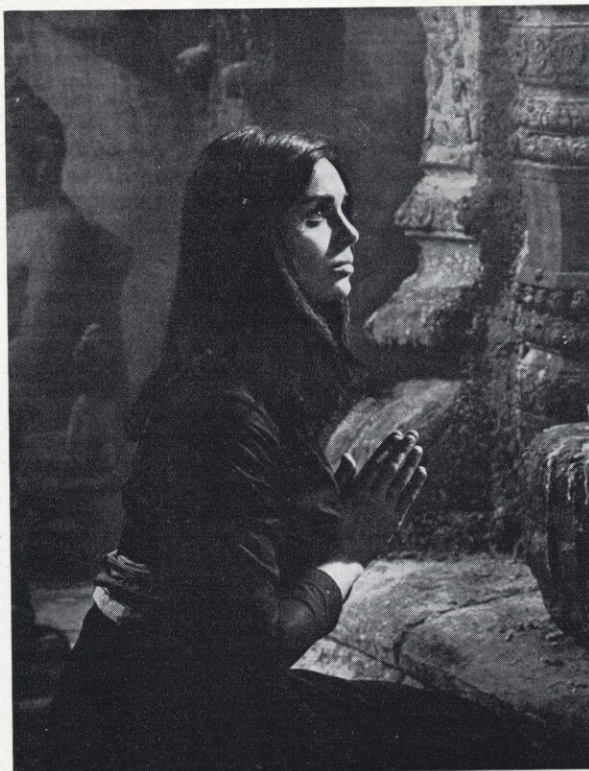
Perhaps it is best to say that the style is myself. The style of this movie, *Lord Jim*, is me, now, at this time of my life, whatever I have learned or thought or felt or desired or feared, what small victories I have won and the many defeats I have suffered. The style is all my hopes—yes—that is the word—*hopes*.

Perhaps the essential difference between man and all other animals is *hope*. Other animals can feel hunger and thirst and fear and pride. Other animals can remember the past, the feel of a blow, the memory of pain, the satisfaction of desire—In most things man is firmly related to other animals—all things but one—no animal but man knows the meaning of hope.

Without hope, man degenerates to the level of a beast.

With hope, man can seek the truth about himself, find it, acknowledge it, face it, and do something about it, hopefully, become a better man. That is the story of *Lord Jim*. That *ought* to be the story of Everyman.

Richard Brooks



# FILMOGRAPHY

## RICHARD BROOKS

Born Philadelphia, 1912. Journalist and radio commentator. Wrote short stories and novels “The Brick Foxhole”, “Boiling Point” and “The Producer”. Won Oscar for his screenplay “Elmer Gantry”. Married to Jean Simmons.

### Screenplay Credits

SWELL GUY, 1947 Universal. Directed by Frank Tuttle. Screenplay by Brooks based on a play by Gilbert Emery. With Sonny Tufts, Ann Blyth.

BRUTE FORCE, 1947 Universal. Directed by Jules Dassin. Produced by Mark Hellinger. With Burt Lancaster, Ann Blyth, Yvonne DeCarlo, Hume Cronyn, Ella Raines and Charles Bickford.

TO THE VICTOR, 1948 Warners. Directed by Delmer Daves. Screenplay by Brooks. Cert. A. 101 mins. With Denis Morgan, Viveca Lindfors.

KEY LARGO, 1948 Warners. Directed by John Huston. Screenplay by Brooks and Huston from a play by Maxwell Anderson. Photographed by Karl Freund. Cert. A. 100 mins. With Humphrey Bogart, Lauren Bacall, Edward G. Robinson, Claire Trevor, Lionel Barrymore.

MYSTERY STREET, 1950 M.G.M.

Directed by John Sturges. Produced by Frank E. Taylor. Screenplay by Brooks and Sydney Boehm from a story by Leonard Spigelgass. Photographed by John Alton. Cert. A. 88 mins. With Ricardo Montalban, Sally Forrest, Bruce Bennett, Elsa Lanchester, Jan Sterling, Marshall Thompson, Betsy Blair.

STORM WARNING, 1950 Warners. Directed by Stuart Heisler. Produced by Jerry Wald. Screenplay

Stills: Lord Jim. Above: Richard Brooks rehearsing a scene from the film with Dahlia Lavi. Below: Dahlia Lavi as she appears in it in the film.



by Brooks and Daniel Fuchs. Cert. A. 89 mins. With Ginger Rogers, Ronald Reagan, Doris Day, Steve Cochran.

**ANY NUMBER CAN PLAY,**  
1950 M.G.M.

Directed by Mervyn LeRoy. Produced by Arthur Freed. Brooks' screenplay based on a novel by Edward Harris Heath. Cert. A. 102 mins. With Clark Gable, Alexis Smith, Wendell Corey, Audrey Totter, Mary Astor.

*Films directed by Brooks.*

**CRISIS,** 1950 M.G.M.  
Directed and written by Brooks, from a story by George Tabori. Produced by Arthur Freed. Photographed by Ray June. Music by Miklos Rosza. Played by Vincente Gomez. Cert. A. 95 mins. With Cary Grant (Dr. Eugene Ferguson), Jose Ferrer (Raoul Farrago), Signe Hasso (Isabel Farrago), Paula Raymond (Helen Ferguson), Ramon Navarro (Colonel Adragon), Antonio Moreno (Dr. Niera), Leon Ames (Sam Proctor), Gilbert Roland (Gonzales).

**THE LIGHT TOUCH,** 1951  
M.G.M.

Directed and written by Brooks, suggested by a story by Jed Harris and Tom Reed. Produced by Pandro S. Berman. Photographed by Robert Surtees. Music by Miklos Rosza. Cert. A. 107 mins. With Stewart Granger (Sam Conride), Pier Angeli (Anna Vasarri), George Sanders (Felix Guignol), Kurt Kasznar (Mr. Aramescu), Joseph Calleia (Lt. Massiro), Larry Keating (Mr. Hawkey), Rhys Williams (Mr. MacWade), Norman Lloyd (Anton), Mike Mazurki (Charles).

**DEADLINE, USA** (English Title, **DEADLINE**), 1952 Fox.

Directed and written by Brooks. Produced by Sol C. Siegel. Photographed by Milton Krasner. Music by Cyril Mockridge. Cert. A. 87 mins. With Humphrey Bogart (Ed Hutcheson), Ethel Barrymore (Mrs. Garrison), Kim Hunter (Nora), Ed Begley (Frank Allen), Warren Stevens (Burrows), Paul Stewart (Thompson), Martin Gabel (Rienzi), Joseph De Santis (Schmidt), Joyce Mackenzie (Kitty Garrison Geary), Audrey Christie (Mrs. Willebrandt), Fay Baker (Alice Garrison Geary), Jim Backus (Cleary).

**BATTLE CIRCUS,** 1952 M.G.M.

Directed and written by Brooks, based on a story by Allen Rivkin and Laura Kerr. Produced by Pandro S. Berman. Photographed by John Alton. Music by Lennie Hayton. Cert. A. 87 mins. With Humphrey Bogart (Major Jed Webbe), June Allyson (Lt. Ruth McCara), Keenan Wynn (Sgt. Orvil Statt), Robert Keith (Lt.-Col. Hillary Walters), William-

Campbell (Capt. John Rustford), Patricia Tiernan (Lt. Rose Ashland), Adele Longmire (Lt. Jane Franklin).

**TAKE THE HIGH GROUND**  
1953 M.G.M.

Directed by Brooks. Produced by Dore Schary. Associate Producer, Herman Hoffman. Screenplay by Millard Kaufman. Photographed in Ansco Color by John Alton. Music by Dmitri Tiomkin. Cert. A. 101 mins. With Richard Widmark (Sgt. Thorne Ryan), Karl Malden (Sgt. Laverne Holt), Carleton Carpenter (Merton Tolliver), Elaine Stewart (Julie Mollison), Russ Tamblyn (Paul Jamison), Jerome Courtland (Elvin Carey), Steve Forrest (Lobo Naglaski), Robert Arthur (Don Dover).

**THE FLAME AND THE FLESH,** 1954 M.G.M.

Directed by Brooks. Produced by Joe Pasternak. Screenplay by Helen Deutsch, based on a novel by Auguste Bailly. Photographed in Technicolor by Christopher Challis. Music by Nicholas Brodsky. Lyrics by Jack Lawrence. Cert. X. 104 mins. With Lana Turner (Madeline), Pier Angeli (Lisa), Carlos Thompson (Nino), Bonar Colleano (Ciccio), Charles Goldner (Mondari), Peter Illing (Peppe), Rosalie Crutchley (Francesca), Marne Maitland (Filiberto).

**THE LAST TIME I SAW PARIS,** 1954 M.G.M.

Directed by Brooks. Produced by Jack Cummings. Screenplay by Julius J. and Philip G. Epstein, from a story by F. Scott Fitzgerald. Photographed in Technicolor by Joseph Ruttenberg. Music by Conrad Salinger. Music supervised by Saul Chaplin. Cert. A. 116 mins. With Elizabeth Taylor (Helen Ellswirth), Van Johnson (Charles Wills), Walter Pidgeon (James Ellswirth), Donna Reed (Marion Ellswirth), Eva Gabor (Lorraine Quarl), Kurt Kasznar (Maurice), George Dolenz (Claude Matiene), Roger Moore (Paul), Celia Lovsky (Mama).

**THE BLACKBOARD JUNGLE**  
1955 M.G.M.

Directed and written by Brooks, based on the novel by Evan Hunter. Produced by Pandro S. Berman. Photographed by Russell Harlan. Music adaptation by Charles Wolcott. Cert. X. 94 mins. With Glenn Ford (Richard Dadier), Anne Francis (Anne Dadier), Louis Calhern (Jim Mumdock), Margaret Hayes (Louis Hammond), John Hoyt (Mr. Warneke), Richard Kiley (Joshua Y. Edwards), Emile Meyer (Mr. Halloran), Warner Anderson (Dr. Bradley), Sidney Poitier (Gregory Miller), Vic Morrow (Artie West), Dan Terranova (Belazi), Rafael Campos (Pete Morales).

**THE LAST HUNT,** 1955  
M.G.M.

Directed and written by Brooks, from the novel by Milton Loft. Produced by Dore Schary. Photographed in CinemaScope and EastmanColor by Russell Harlan. Music by Daniele Amfitheatrof. Cert. A. 98 mins. With Robert Taylor (Charlie Gilson), Stewart Granger (Sandy McKenzie), Lloyd Nolan (Woodfoot), Debra Paget (Indian Girl), Russ Tamblyn (Jimmy), Constance Ford (Peg), Joe De Santis (Ed Black), Ainslie Pryor (Indian Agent).

**A CATERED AFFAIR,** 1956  
(English Title **WEDDING BREAKFAST**) M.G.M.

Directed by Brooks. Produced by Sam Zimbalist. Screenplay by Gore Vidal from a television play by Paddy Chayefsky. Photographed by John Alton. Music by André Previn. Cert. U. 94 mins. With Bette Davis (Mrs. Hurley), Ernest Borgnine (Tom Hurley), Debbie Reynolds (Jane Hurley), Barry Fitzgerald (Uncle Jack Conlon), Rod Taylor (Ralph Halloran), Robert Simon (Mr. Halloran), Madge Kennedy (Mrs. Halloran), Dorothy Stickney (Mrs. Rafferty), Joan Camden (Alice), Ray Sticklyn (Eddie Hurley), Jay Adler (Sam Leiter).

**SOMETHING OF VALUE,** 1957  
M.G.M.

Directed and written by Brooks from a novel by Robert C. Ruark. Produced by Pandro S. Bergman. Photographed by Russell Harlan. Music by Miklos Rosza. Cert. A. 113 mins. With Rock Hudson (Peter McKenzie), Dana Wynter (Holly Keith), Wendy Hiller (Elizabeth Newton), Sidney Poitier (Kymani), Juano Hernandez (Njogu), William Marshall (Leader), Robert Beatty (Jeff Newton), Walter Fitzgerald (Henry McKenzie), Michael Pate (Joe Matson), Ivan Dixon (Lathela).

**THE BROTHERS KARAMAZOV,** 1958 M.G.M. (An Avon Production).

Directed and written by Brooks from a novel by Dostoevsky. Story adapted by Julius J. and Philip G. Epstein. Produced by Pandro S. Berman. Photographed in Metrocolor by John Alton. Music by Bronislau Kaper. Cert. A. 145 mins. With Yul Brynner (Dmitri Karamazov), Maria Schell (Grushenka), Claire Bloom (Katya), Lee J. Cobb (Fyodor Karamazov), Richard Basehart (Ivan Karamazov), Albert Salmi (Smerdyakov), William Shatner (Alyosha Karamazov), Judith Evelyn (Mme. Anna Hohlakov), Harry Townes (Ippolit Kirillov).

**CAT ON A HOT TIN ROOF,** 1958 M.G.M. (An Avon Production). Directed by Brooks. Produced by Lawrence Weingarten.

Screenplay by Brooks and James Poe from the play by Tennessee Williams. Photographed in Metrocolor by William Daniels. Filmed during Hollywood musicians' strike, and given a "canned" music score. Cert. X. 108 mins. With Elizabeth Taylor (Maggie), Paul Newman (Brick), Burl Ives (Big Paddy), Jack Carson (Cooper), Judith Anderson (Big Mama), Madeleine Sherwood (Mae), Larry Gates (Dr. Baugh), Vaughn Taylor (Deacon Davis), Patty Ann Gerrity (Dixie).

**ELMER GANTRY,** 1960 United Artists (Elmer Gantry Productions).

Directed and written by Brooks, from the novel by Sinclair Lewis. Produced by Bernard Smith. Photographed in Eastman Color by John Alton. Music by André Previn. Cert. A. 145 mins. With Burt Lancaster (Elmer Gantry), Jean Simmons (Sister Sharon Falconer), Arthur Kennedy (Jim Lefferts), Shirley Jones (Lulu Bains), Dean Jagger (William L. Morgan), Patti Page (Sister Rachel), Edward Andrews (George Babbitt), John McIntyre (Rev. Pengilly), Hugh Marlowe (Rev. Garrison), Everett Glass (Rev. Brown), Michael Whalen (Rev. Philips), Phillip Ober (Rev. Planck), Wendell Holmes (Rev. Ulrich), Barry Kelley (Capt. Holt), Rex Ingram (Negro Preacher), Casey Adams (Deaf Man).

**SWEET BIRD OF YOUTH,** 1961 M.G.M. (A Roxbury/M.G.M. Production).

Directed and written by Brooks from the play by Tennessee Williams. Produced by Pandro S. Berman. Associate Producer, Kathryn Hereford. Assistant director, Hank Moonjean. Photographed by Milton Krasner in CinemaScope and Metrocolor. Music arranged by Robert Armbruster. Cert. X. 120 mins. With Paul Newman (Chance Wayne), Geraldine Page (Alexandra Del Lago), Ed Begley ("Boss" Finley), Rip Torn (Thomas J. Finley Jr.), Shirley Knight (Heavenly Finley), Mildred Dunnock (Aunt Nonny), Madeleine Sherwood (Miss Lucy), Philip Abbott (Dr. George Scudder), Corey Allen (Scotty), Barry Cahill (Bud), Barry Atwater (Ben Jackson), Charles Arnt (Mayor Hendricks).

**LORD JIM,** 1965 Columbia.

Directed, produced and written by Brooks from the novel by Joseph Conrad. Photographed in Super Panavision 70 and Technicolor by Frederick Young. Music by Bronislau Kaper. With Peter O'Toole, James Mason, Jack Hawkins, Eli Wallach, Paul Lukas, Dahlia Lavi, Akim Tamiroff, Curt Jurgens.

**TOM VALLANCE**



# *The Hundred Horsemen*





*Los Cien Caballeros* (The Hundred Horsemen) was shot in Spain by Vittorio Cottafavi during July and August 1964. It is a Spanish-Italian-German co-production in Techniscope and the first film Cottafavi has shot for three years since his remarkable *Ercole alla Conquista di Atlantide*.

The background to *Los Cien Caballeros* is at the same time very simple and very complicated. You must imagine a Spanish village far back in the past, let's say about the year one thousand. The peasants are working the land and trying to trick their overlords who, in their turn, are occupied with exploiting the peasants; each side is trying to gain the maximum profit at the other's expense. One day the Arabs arrive. They are organised, disciplined, logical people, and they oppose the disorganisation of the Lords and the peasants with intelligence, order, and hard work. These two completely different conceptions of life cannot help but clash, above all because the intellectual superiority of the Arabs stimulates their desire to dominate their weaker neighbours. Two other human groups observe this duel from a distance: the Bandits whose sole problem is survival and who steal democratically from Christians and Arabs alike, and the Monks, who are seeking truth by means of sacrifice and prayer. The tension between the two great opposing forces results in a fight to the death into which everyone is dragged whether they want to be or not. Paying the price of suffering or death, the protagonists (and spectators) will find what is true for them, and will learn how to live on, united, in a new society.

It is easy to understand the risks inherent in filming such a subject. The breadth of the themes and the multiplicity of episodes called for stylisation in order to balance the overall story with the individual details. And the trap of pretension had to be avoided too! The necessary stylisation had to come from the *mise en scene* with each shot going straight to the essential. Having seen thirty-five reels of rushes (80% of the total footage), I believe that Cottafavi has completely, or almost, succeeded in his little *tour de force*.

The interesting thing about *Los Cien Caballeros* is that its meaning is enclosed in the visual conception of the film in its images and movement: in its *mise en scene*. The first appearance of the Arabs illustrates this. Despite the efforts of the Alcalde (the Mayor) at conciliation, there is a violent quarrel between the peasants and the Lords over the price of corn; at the end of this the camera rises to give a

general view of the meeting (thus suddenly suggesting the banality of the arguments) and the smooth camera movements are broken by a very rapid forward tracking shot on to an Arab bowing, smiling, almost stupidly, announcing the arrival of the Sheik. In ironic contrast, a regiment of Arabs makes an impressive entry into the village square, deploying three by three in columns of horsemen. A slow but exciting panning shot shows them arriving in front of the Town Hall looking solemn but also cunning and threatening. The costumes of the Christians (Peasants, Lords, Bandits, Monks) are in red, green and yellow. The Arabs are dressed in a brilliant blue which clashes violently with the other colours. The spectator is led to feel, if only unconsciously, that the arrival of the Arabs is a real intrusion.

In *Los Cien Caballeros*, as in the other films of Cottafavi, complex ideas are often expressed in images which, by their visual force, attain a moral significance. I am thinking, for example, of the Sheik rearing up on his horse before the last battle, mocking his prisoners, and braving destiny. There is something in his movements which suggests Satan: as if by chance, this is the moment at which his pride, raised to its highest pitch, makes him a satanic figure. Devil or not, he has all the assurance of Evil, that malignant elegance to be found in the James Mason character in *North by North-West*. The beauty of Cottafavi's shots (and he uses scope with a marvellous sense of composition) does not owe much to improvisation but to the logic and intelligence with which the facts are presented to us. This way of arranging his shots is often reminiscent of Lang and Preminger. Like them, Cottafavi has a style which reaches towards distillation and purification.

All this reminds me of an accurate remark by Charles Barr concerning *Ercole alla Conquista di Atlantide* in *Movie 3*: "At certain moments Cottafavi succeeds in expressing states of mind, emotions, conflicts, with an extraordinary purity, in crystallised form as it were". It is precisely the "crystallised" quality of certain shots that struck me when viewing the rushes. I think that obtaining this pure state is one of the major preoccupations of Cottafavi, who likes to film his characters above all at moments of profound crisis. Such a moment comes for Halaf, the sensitive and intelligent son of the Sheik, in the carpenter's shop in the monastery, when he discovers an image of Christ on the cross and tries to understand a sacrifice the significance of which escapes him. Halaf's emotion is literally apparent in the picture. (After a difficult start to shooting, this sequence was the first in which I saw Cottafavi relaxed and sure of himself.)

And for the Alcalde, the critical moment arrives when he leaves the square after the execution of the peasant Manuel. He becomes conscious of his cowardice and lack of concern for his own people. After the peasants' revolt, he gives himself up to the Sheik, taking all the blame on himself and becoming the image of dignity and courage. Cottafavi must have felt that these shots were in a way privileged and, when he was shooting them, he directed his actors with extraordinary patience and attention to detail, taking particular care over the looks they exchanged.

The climax of these moments of crisis is death, of course. I think that *Los Cien Caballeros* contains some of the most beautiful deaths ever seen in the cinema: the deaths of Manuel, the Alcalde, the very moving ones of Don Gonzalo and the Sheik. I must limit myself to discussion of the latter. When Cottafavi is using a good actor, there is no nonsense, and since the actor who played the Sheik was good (Wolfgang Preiss who played the three parts of Cornelius-Jordan-Mabuse in *The Thousand Eyes of Dr. Mabuse*), Cottafavi explained to him what he wanted without mincing his words. During the battle, the Sheik is mortally wounded by the dwarf, a very Cottafavian play of contrasts: the strongest is destroyed by the weakest. The Sheik pulls the sword out of his back and discovers slowly and painfully that even for him, the all-powerful, the hour of death has come. He holds the sword in front of him like a cross, symbol of the force he has dared to oppose, looks at the blinding sun, staggers forward a few paces and drops down dead. And that is what Preiss did... except that when he fell the edge of his Arab cloak accidentally hid his face because of his falling movement and the slight breeze. This was a very beautiful but unforeseen idea: the disappearance of the Sheik's face gave an even greater sensation of death, and it was his own cloak—the symbol of his power had now become his shroud! For me, the moral of this incident is very simple: chance is always on the side of the real film maker.

You must not think from all this that the film is a purely tragic one. *Los Cien Caballeros* is also very funny. When I met Cottafavi for the first time two years ago, he pointed out that in *Il Boia di Lilla* (*The Hangman of Lille*, 1952) he had already tried to unite ethics and humour. I think that this important intellectual operation reaches extraordinary heights in *Los Cien Caballeros*. The relationship between the characters and their ideas is observed with great irony. When the young Fernando and his father Don Gonzalo (who wears the same headgear as Don Quixote) arrive at the castle of the Count of Castilla to seek help in order to relieve the village occupied

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*Still: Los Cien Caballeros. In the workshop of the monastery, the Arab Halaf is confronted with Christ.*





by the Arabs, a little army of cripples is mounting guard in the courtyard. They constitute a living war museum, a reminder of past battles and glories. But when it is known that there is a war, the cripples are hidden as soon as possible in order not to discourage the youngsters. In this way, as is often the case in Shakespeare, humour originates at the very centre of tragedy. When Sancha is captured by the Arabs along with the other women of her village, she becomes mad with grief at losing her lover Fernando. "There are no men", she says, so she gets undressed to mortify her cowardly fiancé Jaime. At the depth of her despair she forgets her natural modesty. But at the same time the scene is funny because it is like a modern strip-tease!

Cottafavi, like Lang, has, besides his love of logic and order, a marked taste for some-

thing more delirious. The metronomic movements of the Arabs turn sometimes into real burlesque ballets, and everything concerning the Bandits is pure burlesque. They are big and frightening but governed by a simple dwarf of whom they are absolutely terrified. They sing a refrain in the style of Villon: "And when my body from the ropes shall sway / ... then my neck will know how much my arse doth weigh". This mixture of comedy and tragedy will make *Los Cien Caballeros* very close, I suppose, to Elizabethan theatre.

There are also constant references to contemporary problems: the Count of Castilla's military engineer invents a suit of armour which covers the soldier's entire body and makes him invincible; the Sheik gives a lecture on productivity. These references however are not there gratuit-

ously or with satirical intent, but, as in *Ercole alla Conquista di Atlantide*, they form humorous parallels deliberately intended to express a clear moral judgment about man and the world; the spectator is never brought from the past into the present without good reason. For example, at the very beginning of the film, a crippled painter, who is working on an enormous mural, turns towards the audience and begins to talk about the characters represented in his painting. We realise that the painting is an altar-piece in which there is no central figure, and in which any character can become and effectively becomes the centre of the story. The painter's words, although evoking a long-past age, also reveal the perspective opened up by looking at things from the point of view of a man of today, so that he will understand the moral of the fable. With the help of this "distanciation", one can easily follow the structure and argument of the film: it's about peace, war and life, showing possible attitudes that can be adopted towards them. Perhaps this sounds as if it is a "film with a message", but, as Cottafavi said: "We must not make political or ethical speeches, we must be political and ethical, then people will understand us more directly than through words". Well, the chips are down, now it's up to the public. . . .

Jose Luis Guarner

*Stills: Above: Sancha (Antonella Lualdi) meets Fernando (Mark Damon)—a discussion about the price of some sacks of corn. Below: Sancha sees the bodies of her father (the Alcalde) and other notables being cut down.*





# The Universal HITCHCOCK

In his interviews, Hitchcock, feeling himself suspected of being secretly an intellectual, rarely admits to anything incriminating. At question time he displays footwork of a nimble grace rivalled only by the steeper performances of Otto Preminger: unshaken by the near-certifiable imbecility of his interrogators, he raises the press conference to the level of art. Hitchcock is not the man to be trapped into saying anything that would detract from his chosen image: he is the Master of Suspense, not a mere intellectual. While he skilfully adjusts his performance to suit his listeners even to encourage them, he disavows any intellectual intent in his films—"I'm more interested in the technique of story telling by means of film rather than in what the film contains".

All this seems like fine ammunition to the critics who can still see Hitch only in terms of the genteel trivia which he served up in the 'thirties. Penelope Houston, in her right-minded worm's eye view of Hitchcock, derived much comfort from his answer to the critics of a certain French magazine when they asked: "What is the deepest logic of your films?"

"To put the audience through it", said Hitch, and for once in an interview, he was telling the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. Realising that initial reactions to the cinema are essentially emotional rather than intellectual, he thinks and is willing to talk about his films in terms of inducing emotions in the spectators: "You should not be permitted to reason. Because the film should be stronger than reason". In Hitchcock movies, where nothing appears just because it happens to be in the shot, everything is calculated for the single purpose of inducing emotions. Naturalistic details are not included to show us the real world for its own sake. There is an ulterior motive: to make us feel (whether or not we think) that we are watching things relevant to our own experience. Hitchcock is fond of scenes in ordinary places like shops, offices or restaurants, and in this he is capitalising on the complacency which he attacks with *The Birds*. In familiar, safe places, where we spend large parts of our lives, nothing ghastly is likely to happen.

At least as crucial to the Hitchcock method as setting and camera technique is his concern with character, his selection of words, movements and tones of voice. He means his characters to stand up to a good deal of examination. That they should be convincing is only another means to the Hitchcockian end. However complex they may be, they are not there to be

studied but to generate emotions in the spectator. In *Marnie*, which shows Hitchcock at his most extreme, and most powerful, we are continually prevented from examining the heroine's emotional disturbances with detachment because of the related emotional disturbances that are being produced in us.

Many critics refuse to admit that *Marnie* produces any reaction in them beyond disappointment or irritation. Perhaps, in the way of film critics, they are reacting only to the film level of its script, in which Hitchcock's *Marnie* is nowhere to be found. The predictable common ground between the film's detractors is their refusal to admit that it affected them emotionally.

Penelope Houston pointed out gleefully that almost any interpretation would fit *The Birds*. The lady has an unfortunate knack of using such true and interesting statements as if they were damaging criticisms. The ambiguity of the film's meaning is a prime virtue. If it had a specific allegorical meaning, it would have a particular relevance to each spectator, who could then deal with it on its own level. But its very ambiguity makes the threat operate irresistibly at every level of audience consciousness.

The events in *The Birds* could represent the end of the world: Judgment Day. After all, in the words of the Book of Common Prayer: "The day of the Lord cometh as a thief in the night: and when men shall say, Peace, and all things are safe, then shall sudden destruction come upon them . . . and they shall not escape". In another way, too, it is Judgment Day. For all its major characters it is the all-time moment of truth, when they are revealed for what they are. Its *modus operandi* is the biblically traditional one, the plague, with the birds as a temperate zone equivalent for the locust trouble that hit ancient Egypt. As a vision of Judgment Day, it is singularly astute: a miniature version, cut off from the world at large, which is only in evidence through a couple of radio broadcasts that minimise the peril. In fact Hitchcock eliminated shots of the Golden Gate Bridge covered in birds. Any attempt to show worldwide destruction would have transformed the whole effort into a piece of science fiction fantasy, an *On the Beach*.

But *The Birds*, while it contains references to Judgment Day, is not completely an allegory. It shows only a tentative sorting out of the characters and the essence of the ending is that life still has to be attempted even in a world completely dominated by birds—at the end

there is no doubt that the birds have won: the people are leaving, the birds remain. *The Fall of the Roman Empire* is much more nearly about the end of the world, at least about the end of a world. The essence of *The Birds*, as of all late Hitchcock movies, is that it applies not just to people in a specific situation (like the end of the world) but to everyone, and most immediately to the audience in the cinema.

Why do the birds come? Perhaps as a punishment—the Judgment Day references carry with them hints of Divine retribution. The two evident sins for which humanity (as represented by Melanie Daniels and the inhabitants of Bodega Bay) is to be punished are complacency and mendacity. Melanie's main behaviour pattern in the first part of the film is lying, and Mitch Brenner and the townspeople are complacent, for example, in assuming that Melanie is *merely* as she appears: rich socialite. Characteristically, Hitchcock ensnares us into finding ourselves taking exactly the same attitude to Melanie: after she has delivered the love birds to the Brenner farm, she gets back into the boat and pushes off with an oar while the boat is still tied by its stern to the landing stage. Aha, we think smugly, stupid bird! But not a bit of it. Melanie is demonstrating her capability in boats by using the stern line to swing the boat round for her return to the town.

The two sins are linked in Melanie's complacent lying and in everyone's lying complacency about nature. *The Birds* is a film about man and nature: not a *Man of Aran* or a *Where the River Bends* about isolated or pioneering man surviving in the face of environmental rigours—that would be too particular, too distant and therefore alien to Hitchcock's purposes. He treats this traditional theme in a novel manner, picking on the one angle that could interest him in a generally un-Hitchcockian subject. He looks at the attitude of comfortably civilised people towards nature. The people of Bodega Bay do what the rugged pioneers could not, they represent *us*.

Their attitudes are very typical and, furthermore, we are made to find ourselves sharing them. They could mostly be summed up by one complacent answer to the question, what is nature there for? It is there for us. We know that nature is red in tooth and claw, but we choose to ignore this in favour of enjoying it as decor. "Birds are not aggressive creatures" says Mrs. Bundy whose avocation is bird-watching, "They bring beauty into the world".

Hitchcock expounds his theme of man and



nature largely in terms of man and man. To the inhabitants of Bodega Bay, Melanie is just a rare migrant: a rich socialite on the wing. All through the film, we see and are involved in reactions to people and situations which assume that everything is as it appears and can be judged and sorted away according to past experience—reactions of just the sort that Hitchcock films discourage. The key to all the complacency is the desire to pigeon-hole experience into known categories that make life seem more secure and comprehensible. When Mrs. Brenner's hens stop eating, she assumed that she has been sold bad feed. She is very upset indeed when Fred Brinkmeyer, the storekeeper, tells her that Dan Fawcett's hens have also stopped eating, and that Dan Fawcett bought a different brand of feed. Categorisation is even essential to the workings of society: Annie Hayworth complains that because Fred Brinkmeyer can't remember names, the mail never gets to the right place.

Hitchcock's position, which is not *stated* but *felt*, in *The Birds* extends the view of the world, which found a multiplicity of individual expressions in his earlier films, to the level of a universal generalisation. The red herrings that swam in shoals through his earlier films were evidence of Hitchcock's mistrust of appearances: nothing is as it seems. The desire of the characters for security leads them to assumptions that are contradicted by the very nature of the world in which they live.

Against a view of the bird attacks as retribution could be set the disproportion between the punishment and the sins which at least to the audience seem small. The travelling salesman could perhaps have deserved his fiery doom, indirectly caused by the birds, for suggesting that they were messy creatures and should be wiped out. But the unfortunate Dan Fawcett, found in the wreckage of his bedroom with his eyes pecked out, had apparently done nothing worse than keeping chickens. Above all, what had Annie Hayworth done? As played by Suzanne Pleshette, she is the most sympathetic of the leading characters. She may be lying to Melanie and herself about her reasons for staying in Bodega Bay (she is obviously still in love with Mitch), and there are at least two good dramatic reasons why she should perish. But at least individual retribution is not behind the action of the birds. As the inhabitants of Bodega Bay are meant to typify all of us, they could be the subjects of that old Hitchcock device, transference of guilt, this time on a suitably universal scale, from the whole world to them—a Christ population!

In fact, the disparity between sin and retribution provides no case against the Judgment Day interpretation. The idea that retribution ought to operate quantitatively has a most un-Hitchcockian complacency about it. A long line of unfortunates in Hitchcock movies have brought down calamity on their heads with apparent peccadilloes. The logic inherent in making the punishment fit the crime is anyway anathema to Hitchcock. *The Birds* turns the logic of appearances inside out with quite unprecedented thoroughness.

The reason that the birds come is because Hitchcock sent them, and if anyone is being punished, it is us. In the movies, the director can have the role of God. Hitchcock is the only director to take the part whole-heartedly. He is the Manipulator of Coincidence, who involves the McKenna family in a political assassination in London by making a bus from Casablanca to Marrakesh swerve on the road at the beginning of *The Man who Knew Too Much*. And he alone is in control of the feelings of the audience in the cinema—where in *The Birds* he loses that

control, it is because the divine apparatus of special effects lets him down. The attacks are sometimes a relief in their unconvincingness after the suspense of the build-up. In view of Hitchcock's awareness of the sexual nature of suspense, even this defect has a certain suitability.

If Hitch is aiming his birds at us, the attacks are calculated for maximum disturbance. They attack out of a clear sky in the most reassuringly domesticated of landscapes: once more our complacency is being used against us. We do deserve all we get, because like the McKennas, by seeking excitement, we have wished the trouble upon ourselves. We must have wanted the birds to come, otherwise we would not have spent our money at the box-office.

The use of birds as the assault vehicles is also calculated as a particular affront to our feelings about birds: known carnivores like eagles are even avoided in favour of commoner and apparently friendlier species. In our hubristically man-centred view of the world we even like to see birds as little people. This anthropomorphism makes us want to put them in little houses—the first sequence of *The Birds* even has a miniature tenement for birds. It is illustrated by the love birds which lean out as Melanie's car rounds a corner on the road to Bodega Bay.

If we tend to view birds as people, the film encourages us to view people as birds. Melanie has bright eyes and a tendency to cock her head on one side inquiringly or seductively. Her car emits bird-like screeches as it swoops down the zig-zag road into Bodega Bay. The children's voices in the school are unnaturally shrill. The first assault on Melanie by a single gull comes when she is at her most bird-like. The crows mass for the attack on the school, while the children are singing inside. Shock at birds attacking people is coupled with shock that they attack each other in a most inhuman fashion.

The attacks have their effect on the audience because they are arbitrary in their operation (it is very disturbing that the birds suddenly stop when they have almost broken into the Brenner house) and really unexplained in their origin. Hitchcock inserts a sequence in the restaurant in which he systematically destroys possible explanations put into the mouths of the customers, who together form a micocosm of America and whose mutually exclusive complacencies demonstrate the impossibility of resistance. "It's the end of the world", says the drunk, with some glee and much biblical quotation. If he represents religion, Mrs. Bundy's complacency is that of science which has a totally anti-Hitchcockian method, making theories based on observation with the aim of increasing the predictability of things. She refuses to believe the facts because they don't square with her scientific knowledge. The salesman who wants to wipe out the birds is the representative of militarism (the birds could of course represent Communists, who are always Among Us and waiting for the time when they can take over). The militarist's happy assumption that the birds *could* be wiped out is destroyed by Mrs. Bundy's science which demonstrates their overwhelming numbers. Having discounted the answers provided by religion, science and militarism, Hitchcock shows us public opinion as a fourth major force. It is personified by the woman who sits with her children, eating Southern fried chicken and not wanting to hear about the danger. She tries to silence the ominous reports by saying that her children are afraid—which they are not, until they sense her fear. She tries to escape, and when a bird attack stops her, she turns on Melanie and accuses her of being the cause of the attacks, which she

says (wrongly) didn't happen until Melanie came there. Public opinion turns to witch hunt—nothing more than a desperately complacent search for an explanation of the attacks. But while the woman is addressing Melanie, the camera takes up Melanie's subjective viewpoint, so that the words are addressed straight to us; "I think you're evil". Although the woman is hysterical, and there is no firm connection between Melanie's arrival and the bird attacks, we feel guilty. The guilt is emotionally aroused and totally irrational.

If the apparently unprovoked assault of *The Birds* is an allegory of anything, it is an allegory of Hitchcock's films. He is a specialist in attacks on the audience. He has attacked us with kidnapping, with attempted and (in *Psycho*) actual murder of our identification figure, with unjust accusation of murder and with the guilt of actually having murdered. The latter is not logically comparable with the others, but emotionally is just as much an attack on us as spectators. We haven't committed a murder but Hitchcock uses all his resources to make sure that we feel guilty about it. This irrational guilt is not intended as a moral lesson (though it may have that effect) but as a device to break down our defences.

In the films where the attack is logically an external coincidence (like *I Confess*), the guilt is brought in separately. Very often it's sexual: some kind of love affair among the principals, morally or psychologically dubious enough to make us uneasy, and excusable enough to keep us involved.

In *Marnie*, guilt and insecurity are inextricably joined. The guilt is evoked by Marnie's pathological stealing, lying and frigidity, the insecurity by her equally pathological fears, her nightmares and her climactic near-derangement. It is as if parts of Marion Crane and Norman Bates from *Psycho* had been combined in one person. On the other hand, Marnie is also an extension of Melanie, making her lying into a way of life. She also takes Melanie's sexual traits to an extreme. In fact, she could well be the quintessence of Hitchcock's hostile view of American womanhood. In an interview, which we hope to publish some day in *Movie*, he says of Melanie in *The Birds* that "the whole performance, the whole shape deals with the smug American girl who talks sex, lives sex, but won't go to bed. We have a vulgar phrase for that: they are what are called cock-teasers". It is this characteristic that is for Marnie both an unconscious necessity and a calculated manner of behaviour. Her attractiveness is part of her technique as a thief. There are other linkages between Melanie and Marnie apart from the incarnation of both in the admirable Miss Hedren. They have the same reaction to extreme stress—in one case the bird attack and in the other the threat of sexual intercourse on the first night of the honeymoon. In both films Miss Hedren cowers back on a sofa and draws her legs up under her.

Marnie is likeable, and we're encouraged to identify with her. She's happy the first time we hear her speak, and even the furious Strutt, short of \$9,967, sums her up by saying, "She seemed so nice". We identify with her even more closely by taking her contemptuous attitude to the man whose lust has made him an easy target for theft, as Strutt remembers her attractions for the benefit of the detectives: "Size 8 dress, blue eyes, black . . . wavy hair". Hitchcock undermines our sense of security by making us identify with a woman who turns out to be a frigid kleptomaniac. The disturbances of her life involve us irresistibly. Meanwhile (apart from the exceptional dislocations from



sanity) the sense of everyday life is maintained. If we stopped feeling the value of everyday life, the threat would lose its effectiveness.

Marnie's world, which we accept completely during the first part of the film, is represented in the structure of the images. *The Birds* was mostly built around level rectangles: ordinary and safe-seeming, echoing the shape of the screen. They are made up of buildings, cars, birdcages and such places of comparative security. When, on a number of anxious fades, the rectangle is formed by two people, it looks much more vulnerable. At certain moments, particularly of stress (Mrs. Brenner's admission that she has never felt safe since her husband died and the attack on the house), Hitchcock slants the rectangle and destroys the stability of the image—a technique he has often used subliminally to undermine our own stability.

*Marnie* is built almost continuously out of slanted rectangles, from the very first shot of Marnie's conspicuously yellow handbag full of money forming a lozenge shape on the screen. The following sequence of her covering her tracks is shown in a series of close-ups of rectangular objects tilted with respect to the plane of the image: suitcases, social security cards, left-luggage locker and grating (down which she drops the key of the locker). So many shots can be seen as slanted rectangles that, while these are definitely unstable, any other shape comes to seem even more so, particularly the sensible level rectangles of Bodega Bay stability. Hitchcock uses the triangular compositions of *Rope* similarly, reserving the square, level two-shots for the most unnatural and discomforting moments, usually of psychological clash between the two young murderers.

After the decorous lettering of the credits in their comfortably rectangular border, backed by Bernard Herrmann's violently romantic music, the close-up of the handbag which starts the first shot establishes the slanted image. It is at first so close that we can see only the slant of her elbow with which she is holding the bag, and a slanted glimpse of what later turns out to be railway line. The camera slows down so that we can see her at full length: unattractive long black hair and a heavy suitcase. It follows her in this position then stops, while she continues walking away and then, at some distance from the camera, puts the suitcase down beside a seat and pauses there. Now we can see an empty station, shown in slanted, rectangular shapes arranged symmetrically on either side of the image.

It is a shot that is unusually arbitrary in appearance, even in the context of Hitchcock's essentially arbitrary *mise-en-scène*, which, although it may illustrate the action, is there for its own sake and just has to be accepted. If it weren't continuously fascinating, it would be intolerable. The first shot of *Marnie* has the characteristic of Hitchcock tracking shots: it follows rather than leads by determining the movement of the character, so that we don't know where it's taking us. It is a shot of enormous complexity. From one point of view, it is a single shot montage of bulging handbag, Marnie and empty station, telling us quite clearly that she is travelling some distance at an unusual hour with this bag and its contents. The end of the shot has the chilly symmetry of a street or a corridor, seen down its length, an image Hitchcock uses in *The Birds* (for example where Mrs. Brenner starts down the corridor towards Dan Fawcett's bedroom) and more in *Marnie* where it fits more closely into the design. Its function is often to make us wonder what we may find at the other end. In this particular shot, the symmetry is broken

slightly, obviously from choice, by the unassimilated cylindrical shape of a gas-holder in the distance.

Again, the composition of the image—Marnie walking directly away from the camera down the straight line on the platform, which bisects the image, with the great slanting planes of the platform roof flying out at us on either side—is of the character having chosen a course and holding to it, threatened by the potential schizophrenia of the split, symmetrical picture.

Finally, the shot is a very direct image of Marnie's life, of getting away, with the camera in pursuit flagging and finally grinding to a halt, while Marnie doesn't stop until she is at a good distance and in her own world, suggested by the slanted perspectives of the platform roof above her. This interpretation of pursuer and pursued is encouraged by the next shot, which shows Strutt staring out of the screen as if the first shot had been a Hitchcock subjective shot from which he would cut to the person whose viewpoint he had been showing.

"Robbed!" says Strutt, and the sequence goes on to establish his furious determination on vengeance. He talks about it to the amused Mark Rutland, who's there on business. Rutland remembers noticing the dark-haired Marnie when she worked in Strutt's office. Only when the vengeful Strutt and the reflective Rutland have been established do we return to Marnie, and we aren't shown her face until she raises her blonde head from a hand-basin in which is left the remains of the black dye. By presenting the situation in this way, Hitchcock makes sure that we don't feel the past has been erased and the guilt and threat can be forgotten. Guilt and threat have been too massively and immediately established. They will affect our reaction to everything.

What Hitchcock has established is the legal guilt and the apparent threat: theft and imprisonment. But in the Hitchcock world, where nothing is as it seems, one can expect the initial guilt-threat situation to reveal deeper guilt and more serious threat: in this case insanity. Although some spectators may derive a premature zoophilic *frisson* from Marnie's words to her horse, "Oh, Forio, if you want to bite anyone, bite me", we don't learn that there is anything psychologically wrong with Marnie until the sequence in which we meet Mother.

One of the points that emerged from *The Birds* was that the external threat has the function in the film of setting in motion an internal threat of at least equal gravity. The most distressing moment in *The Birds* comes after Melanie has been rescued from the attic, when she regains consciousness and starts fighting desperately with the Brenner family. It is no overstatement to say that the real threat is internal (the external one is anyway, impartial and irresistible), just as in *The Man Who Knew Too Much*, the real threat to the family lay not in the kidnapping but in Ben's desire to dominate his wife.

The mother-figures that are characteristic of Hitchcock movies usually serve to show-up the absence of father-figures. In *Marnie*, Mr. Rutland, Senior, is a nonentity, associated faintly with tastes for horses and pretty girls, but really just with a taste for good cake at afternoon tea. The late Mr. Brenner in *The Birds* is remembered by Mitch's mother as a lost standard of protection: "If only your father were here", she screams at Mitch when she loses control. In his last three films, Hitchcock has gone even further in destroying the protection of the family by embodying the threat in Mother. Mrs. Bates destroyed Norman by indulging her lust, and when he killed her, took

over his body. Mrs. Brenner is the one character to disintegrate in *The Birds*, and represents the internal threat to a civilisation under external strain—her function as a mother has often to be undertaken by Melanie, even by Annie.

In *Marnie*, Mother is the source of both guilt and threat. She has implanted in Marnie the frigidity which is not inherent in her character and which leads to the suicide attempt. It is not the guilt of stealing from which Marnie has to keep running away, although the legal guilt provides the *practical* reason for her flight. We know that Strutt, like the man Marion-Crane robbed in *Psycho*, is unpleasant and probably deserved to lose his money. Whereas Marion's guilts are connected coincidentally with the threat from Mrs. Bates, in *Marnie* mother's old *métier* as a whore is the direct source of both guilt and threat. Marnie commits her mother's murder and is pursued by the guilt of it. Mother remains marked by her guilt because she is crippled, and bodily affliction is the traditional mark of the sinner.

The first sequence at Mrs. Edgar's home starts with the corridor shape of the squalid street outside. We find that the house is clean and unexpectedly well-furnished with Marnie's money. The sequence links together a number of factors, all introduced for the first time and linked together by their introduction in this setting. Marnie gives her mother lots of presents, but mother doesn't show her appreciation as Marnie would like. Making connections after learning the denouement of the film, one realises that this is not a sign, as Marnie thinks, that she doesn't love her, but that refusing to give love in return for gifts is part of her resolve to break away from her former life. Hitchcock emphasises this in the physical nature of the attentions Marnie is demanding. The connection is further strengthened when mother, Bernice, uses her bad leg, the relic of the murder, as the reason to stop Marnie snuggling against her. We've already been shown that Marnie leads a double life, but this sequence provides the first example of her lying, and in the setting of her mother's home we hear the first clear statement of her frigidity in a conversation about Marnie's latest present, thus linking frigidity, mother and money. Bernice: "No man ever give me anything so good." Marnie: "Oh, we don't need men, Mama. We can do very well for ourselves, just you and me." Bernice: "A decent woman don't have need for any man."

In this sequence, too, the nightmare, in a mild and undefined form is linked to mother who interrupts it by coming up the stairs in the half-darkness. This shot, like Melanie's progress to the attic is designed to capitalise on the audience's most irrational associations of upstairs and darkness with childish fears. But in *Marnie* darkness plays a much smaller part than in most Hitchcock films. The threat has come out into everyday life and there is no escape from it.

Marnie is desperately and irrationally jealous of the attentions which her mother lavishes on the little girl, Jessie, who evidently represents her as a child but whose treatment contrasts with the neglect which Marnie must have experienced when Mother was with the clients. This neglect is shown in the climactic flashback as the start of the trouble—little Marnie, left alone during a storm, lying on a couch because her mother can't have her in the bedroom, disturbs mother and lover with her cries. Jessie is not a specially nasty child. She just likes, in the self-centred way of children, to be the focus of attention. It is only because we



are made to share Marnie's view that we see her as a particularly unpleasant child.

In Bernice's house we are subjected to red, a shock which is placed at the opposite end of the sequence from the nightmare: it comes right at the beginning. The two shocks are placed to undermine our defences. Both coming palpably from within, they are set off by external stimuli (the gladioli and the near-quarrel in the kitchen), and have all the suddenness of attacks from outside. The sequence is framed by these two different pre-echoes of the end of the film, when the momentary dislocation threatens to become absolute.

The brief flooding of the screen with red is a parallel to the shot which Hitchcock has imagined of a daisy in close-up suddenly stained with blood. Although many things in the world are red in colour, only one meaning is attached emotionally to red in Hitchcock movies. Marnie's mental disturbance is an excuse for the sudden blood-staining of the screen rather than its *raison d'être*. The red on its various appearances foreshadows the shot at the end of blood spreading across the dead sailor's white T-shirt until it fills the screen. This image has further emotional extensions to the Victorian image of loss of virtue: blood on the sheet.

By the time Marnie goes into action at Rutland & Co., we have been shown her criminal past, her dream-like escapes with Forio, and her problems which are all linked to her mother. It has been demonstrated to us that these problems, as yet undefined, are more serious than the possibility of being caught by the police.

At Rutlands', Mark recognises her but she doesn't recognise him—one respect in which her lack of interest in men is not ideal for her work. (And it is the gesture of pulling skirt over knees that gives Marnie away to him.) Mark has her taken on, invades her life, catches her when she commits the theft and tries to escape, forces her to marry him, and then patiently tries to cope with each further difficulty as it arises. We first see him at Rutlands introduced with some very emphatic Hitchcock montage of close-ups and shots from his point of view into an interview in which he takes a hardly apparent, but crucial, part. This pattern of close-ups and subjective shots is Hitchcock's normal way of dealing with identification figures, but at this stage our identification cannot suddenly transfer to him. The effect here is one of invasion, of having him thrust right into our faces.

The massive close-ups of Mark are the first of many compositions in which slanting lines are provided by his broad shoulders. Here he is leaning casually against a wall of the office. Mark's contribution to the slanting compositions comes about by necessity: he takes such a large part in the film that he has to be involved in its design. Yet his integration into the slanted compositions indicates that his invasion is an entrance and acceptance of Marnie's slanting world as it is.

Mark's most complete acceptance of the Marnie world comes after their marriage, when as a step in his attempt to break down her resistance to him, he fetches her horse, Forio. The horse evidently represents the life which Marnie wants to lead. After the confinement of offices, hotel rooms and railway stations, Marnie galloping out on Forio is an image of freedom—but even the image of freedom is illusory in its appearance, for she is riding in front of a studio back-projection machine.

The contrast between Mark's world and Marnie's is shown in his ownership of a car against hers of a horse. If Marnie's unrealistic

world is represented by horse and obvious back-projection, Mark's real one is shown in the sleek modern car and apparently real backgrounds—in fact back-projection but without the transparent artifice of Marnie's. But the car is more than a symbol of Mark's life. The physical fact of journeys in it—taking Marnie back to Rutlands', back to be confronted with her past in Baltimore—reverses her escapes by train and taxi. The car, Mark's life, is a cage around Marnie (just as the birds made a telephone box into a cage for Melanie). The main interrogation sequences take place in the car (or in bedrooms which for Marnie are even worse). It is even in the car that Mark first makes her aware that he is pursuing her. After she has accepted his invitation to the races, she says, "Are you fond of horses?" "No," he replies, "not at all."

Mark is still a surprising figure to find in a Hitchcock film. Any kind of effective help or protection has usually been avoided: witness the absence of father figures. The Mark character in one form or another is still a comparatively new arrival in Hitchcock. In the films of the 'fifties, however, the central figures were more reliable and the situations less irresistibly overwhelming. In the last three films, the situations are extreme, the attacks are not temporary but relentless, and the figures we identify with are women and thus vulnerable in a way that we can hardly feel James Stewart or Cary Grant to be. Mitch in *The Birds* is a new figure (of whom possibly a trace is to be found in the John Gavin character in *Psycho*) of possible security, slightly aggressive but genuine.

Mark is a much more emphatic development of the essentially good-natured Mitch. Mark, however, is not just a nice guy. He keeps his only relics of his dead wife in a glass case and talks about training a jaguarundi to trust him. "You don't love me," says Marnie in the car back from Garrods, "I'm just something you've caught! You think I'm some kind of animal you've trapped!" "That's right, you are," replies Mark in a determinedly calm voice, "and I've caught something really wild this time, haven't I? I tracked you and caught you and by God I'm going to keep you." While it is obvious that Mark does love Marnie, there are suggestions of Scottie's desire in *Vertigo* to have a woman completely in his power. Even Marnie perceives that there is something pretty bent in Mark's feelings towards her when he is hot to play Mental Health Week: "Talk about dream worlds! You've got a pathological fix on a woman who is not only an admitted criminal but who screams if you come near her. So what about your dreams, Daddy, dear?" After all, Mark does use Marnie's crime as a way of forcing her to marry him; hardly a normal expression of love.

Hitchcock encourages our identification with Mark during the honeymoon sequence. We wait expectantly with him as he nervously fixes drinks while he waits for her to emerge from the bathroom. What is she going to be wearing when she emerges? Plenty, we discover. By identifying with Mark, we are made to feel how unreasonable is her treatment of him. There's some very smart work with the costumes around here. The nightgown which covers even her arms to the wrists poses the question of entry. When Mark cannot restrain himself any longer, he puts into effect the answer which will have occurred to most of the audience by ripping it off, then shamefacedly covers her with a bath-robe. Huge close-ups of him pressing her down on the bed quickly kill our identification with him by making us see the meaning of the experience

for Marnie.

Our identification with Mark resumes when he wakes up to find Marnie gone, when he thinks she has actually killed herself. This is the only place in the film where there is a strong suggestion that any of Marnie's sufferings have transferred to Mark. The search is handled with great emphasis in the series of static corridor shapes, increasingly enclosed, as he runs towards us along empty decks, and particularly in the two terrifyingly subjective moving shots of grey, turbulent sea, which illustrate his fears for her.

The film, then, represents the clash of two dream worlds which are incompatible. Alternatively it is a Christian parable of two sinners helping each other. There is no doubt that, whatever his motives, Mark does help Marnie. Once Marnie is able to accept his attentions or, initially, his help, the focus of his mental abnormality will be destroyed and one presumes that he will then be able to love Marnie in a "normal" manner.

Mark's attempts to cure Marnie carry her no further than wanting to be cured. "Why can't you leave me alone?" is finally replaced by "Oh, why can't somebody help me?". Fade out.

Fade in to a high angle shot along the main hall of the Rutland house as guests come in for the party at which Marnie is to be presented to them. Yet another statement of the corridor image, this shot is built to a high pitch of suspense as the camera moves in towards the door through which the guests are entering, and we realise as the camera gets closer, someone is going to come in. The someone is Strutt. The whole link from one sequence to the next has, in spite of the totally different technique, the same feeling of causal relationship as the very protracted dissolve in *The Wrong Man* between Manny Balestrero praying in front of a crucifix after the mis-trial and the right man walking towards the camera.

Strutt as the answer to anyone's prayers is a remarkable idea, but Marnie's trouble cannot be solved as simply as Manny's. There has to be a cathartic experience in order to bring her to a normal life. The structure of the film suggests that only when she gets as far as wanting help can it come to her. As a result of Strutt's appearance, she is raised to a level of hysteria, from which there is no physical escape because of Mark. While he negotiates with Strutt, Marnie has to go out with the hunt. The combination of panic and hysteria caused by Strutt and another red crisis triggered by a brightly coloured hunting jacket sends her galloping away, urging Forio on faster and faster. The cause of the accident is partly her own involuntary feelings, but her insistence that she should herself shoot the injured Forio is something more: it is the destruction of her dream world, of which her stealing is part. The reason why she cannot steal from the Rutland safe lies in the death of Forio rather than prevention by her feelings for Mark. The destruction of one part of her life has to be complemented by that of her sexual guilt, just as the revelation of the one was complemented by the revelation of the other at the start of the film. The relationship which was built up at the beginning between mother and daughter has to be broken down before the proper one can begin to appear, as it does at the end of the film. All Hitchcock provides is signs of hope. As at the end of *The Birds*, the internal threat has been ended, but the external threat, here danger of arrest, remains.

Ian Cameron  
Richard Jeffery



# KING & COUNTRY

Hitchcock has said that he likes to go on making films even when he's not deeply involved: such films enable him to "recharge his batteries". *King and Country* seems to me to be this kind of film, and the disappointing things in it needn't indicate a decline in Losey's power. Like Preminger's *Man with the Golden Arm* it is an example of how to make an honourable and intelligent film on a clear-cut moral/social issue—it is completely remote from the standard Dearden-Relf item which could have been run up from the same source-material—although at a deeper level it is not entirely satisfactory.

*King and Country* is a war film with no war shown. All we see and hear of the war is the distant flares and shells, which Losey uses to punctuate the action. Although he and his collaborators have greatly changed the original material (novel, then stage and Television play) they have not opened it out in the obvious way: they don't show us Hamp's act of desertion.

Hamp is a private, a decent soldier, simple and inarticulate, exposed to the war for three years, who one day walked away from the trenches in the general direction of home. He had foreseen this, but not planned it, and he has predictably been caught. Just as predictably, he is tried, condemned and shot. When we first see him he is awaiting trial. Everyone, officers and men, takes it for granted that he will be shot. Before even meeting him, his defending officer, Captain Hargreaves, assumes he ought to be: "When a dog's back's broken you shoot it, not sit around chatting all day." Before the trial begins, the Sergeant-Major asks "Who's in charge of the *later* formalities?"

The framework of the film reinforces this impression of inevitability. Its opening is typical of Losey: the close scrutiny of significant settings before any character is introduced. An extended camera-movement, at close range, over the Hyde Park war memorial; behind the credits, an equally close track over the mud at the Front (Losey's own credit as director comes up over the hub of a wheel—a nice metaphor). While the camera moves across still photographs of the war, Courtenay's voice recites Housman's "Here dead lie we . . . ." (misquoted, for no conceivable reason). This ends on the image of a skull. Dissolve to Hamp's face.

Parallel to Hamp's trial run scenes in which a group of privates trap and kill rats.

This construction, and the fact that we don't see Hamp's desertion and thus have a chance to construe it in our own way, being one-up on the court, puts the emphasis on logic. The facts are not in dispute, they are given. The issue at the court martial is one between different deductions from the same premises.

Hamp himself is, as Hargreaves describes him, "embarrassingly honest". He is a sort of negative Socrates, who acted as he felt impelled to and is incapable, at his trial, of giving the glib answers that the prosecution expects; he has the true Socratic effect of exposing the hollowness of received formulae. His honesty shows up the moral and logical confusion of his prosecutors. The concept of "duty" is constantly thrown at Hamp by the officers, and even by Hargreaves, who at the start asks Hamp what he would have felt if other men had got up and left *him* to do the fighting. Hamp replies "It couldn't have been much worse". Unanswerable. The court-martial debates Hamp's neglect of

his duty. He says afterwards "I kept forgetting they were talking about me".

In his last talk with the Colonel, Hargreaves asks why they are killing Hamp. . . . "Actually why?" The discrepancy between official "why" and "actually why" is so great that it can only be ignored. This discrepancy is clearly signposted—sometimes to the point of over-emphasis—both in dialogue and in imagery. The façade of religion: Hamp's eyes follow the hands of the padre uncomprehendingly as he makes the sign of the cross, and he vomits the Communion wine. The façade of glory (at one stage the film was called *Glory Hole*): the opening shot begins on the chariot on the Hyde Park arch and descends to a boot on the memorial, and these motifs recur ironically throughout the film in shots of dead horses and of boots in mud. The inscription on the memorial is "The Royal Fellowship of

*Still: King and Country, Tom Courtenay and Dirk Bogarde.*







Death"; the film leads up to Hamp's death in the mud from the bullets of his fellow-soldiers; the final words on the soundtrack are the conventional telegram to Hamp's next of kin, stating that he died in action.

The script is full of lines which would in a Dearden film, delivered in close-up by puppet characters, seem facile. "A proper court is concerned with law. It's a bit amateur to plead for justice." "Where's the soul now, padre?" "Not so funny, if you're in Hamp's shoes." Losey "places" such lines meticulously. Hargreaves, too, is much more than a convenient mouth-piece for the film-makers' point of view.

Losey's approach is different from Kubrick's in *Paths of Glory*: his characters, whatever their representative significance, are entirely and individually human. Even in the smallest parts his control of gesture, expression and intonation are stunning. Consider for instance, in Barry Foster's performance as Captain Webb, his expressions as he jabs the needle into Hamp, the way he shuts his eyes tight as he gives the order to fire, and his embarrassed silence before giving evidence at the court martial that Hamp "brewed a damn good cup of tea"—a line which could so easily have been played for caricature. Leo McKern (the M.O.) and Peter Copley (the Colonel) also give performances built up with marvellous economy. Even the junior officers of the court, who say scarcely a word, are fascinating to watch, as is Corporal Hamilton, who recounts the arrest of Hamp: a "heightened" performance, but beautifully controlled and expressive, like so many in Losey's work. One could write pages on this.

*King and Country* nevertheless leaves a curiously unsatisfactory impression. I've met more people who just can't decide whether they like it than with any other film. The fault partly is Losey's mannerisms. Granted that he makes cerebral films, that he wants detached, intelligent attention rather than emotional involvement, I find that some of his effects, by coming across as over-calculated, defeat his object: this applies to his use of high-angle shots, to the insert shots representing Hamp's mental images (these recall the joke insert of the mother dropping dead in *Shoot the Pianist*—but here the device is being used seriously), and to the "Greek chorus" scenes with the privates, that run parallel to the main action; although, as always, one can follow Losey's intentions (he is the most intelligent and articulate of directors), one can question whether



*Stills: King and Country. Above: Hamp gets drunk with the ex-comrades who are to be his executioners the night before the execution. Below: the court martial scene.*



they're convincingly realised. As in *The Servant*, he carefully avoids having to use the fade-in and fade-out, and devises certain rather slick transitions between sequences which, again, can be intellectually justified each time as making a particular point—Losey's effects are never gratuitous—but which provoke a too conscious reaction of "Now what connection does Losey mean us to make this time?" One distracting result of this: a sequence in the officers' quarters opens on a shot of a Beardsley drawing being looked at, close to the camera: Capt. Midgeley, whose book it is, snatches it in irritation: the scene opens out into a long, fluid take: detail being important in Losey, one looks to see who it was who was reading the book, but we're not shown, and indeed it seems clear from the layout of the scene that no one can in fact have been reading it, i.e. that the shot was to this extent faked. This is what I mean by cleverness defeating its purpose.

*The Servant* too is at times oppressively mannered and cerebral. Both films were set up and made very quickly. Pinter has a stronger personality than Losey's other script-writers, and *King and Country* apparently got its impetus from Bogarde's interest in the First World War. Although both films have many parallels with Losey's earlier works, it may be that he was not involved with them at a very deep level. At least, if he was, they indicate a disturbing shrivelling-up of his idea of the range of human possibilities. Both films are remarkably bleak; the action of each ends in a scene, and in a concentrated image, of defeat and degradation; there is no hint of hope or of constructive energy. The feeling one gets from *King and Country* is not so much Hamlet's "What a piece of work is a man. . .", quoted by the gushing *Monthly Film Bulletin* reviewer, as Lear's "Man's life is cheap as beast's". The logic of the film leads inexorably to a dead-end. When formalities are stripped away, there is a blank; all action, in this situation, is futile, the individual is helpless. There is nothing that corresponds to the "uplift" scene at the end of *Paths of Glory*, a very beautiful one, where the men join in the German girls' song before returning to the line.

Other Losey films have significant barren landscapes in them: *The Dividing Line* and *The Damned*, *The Prowler* and *The Criminal* (desert and snowscape in their respective final sequences). In *King and Country*, the surroundings are ugly and barren throughout, mud is everywhere, the action opens and closes on a shot of mud.

Hargreaves is a particularly enigmatic character. One interpretation sees him as becoming deeply involved with Hamp's cause, with an undercurrent of sexual attraction (of the central relationship of

*The Servant*). A lot could be read into the execution sequence. The firing squad fails to dispose of Hamp. Hargreaves steps quickly in front of Webb, who is in charge, props up Hamp (cradles him?) inserts his revolver into his mouth, and shoots him.

Penelope Gilliatt on the other hand (*Sight and Sound*) thinks him as cynical and contemptuous as anyone, simply going through the motions of being the Soldier's Friend. There are scenes which in isolation might support this view, but Hargreaves is more complex than either view suggests.

Army attitudes are ingrained in him. He is clearly not an altogether likeable man. He has no use for Hamp before he meets him. At first he insists on his standing to attention in their interview. Then he lets him stand at ease; eventually they both sit. Increasingly, he brushes aside formality ("What are we here for, a *mock trial*?", he asks the court angrily) and sees through to what lies behind it. It is impossible, from the evidence of the film, to take his conduct of Hamp's defence as being a mechanical exercise, a duty only.

After the trial, a messenger comes to the officers' quarters and tells Hargreaves that "he" would like to speak to him. Hargreaves hesitates and asks "Who?". Obviously he knows perfectly well, but is confused, and puts on an act for the officers' benefit and for his own. Hamp thanks him for his help. Now, for the only time, Hargreaves snaps at him: "If you'd remembered your duty, none of this idiotic rigmarole would have been necessary . . . Don't thank me for doing my duty. I had to, just as you should have done yours".

To take this speech as definitive reveals exactly the kind of over-simplified response that Losey is constantly working against. Immediately after it, a young Lieutenant comes in to announce the sentence ("It is my *duty* to inform you. . ."). Losey's cutting associates Hargreaves with Hamp at the receiving end of this. Hargreaves goes outside. A single shot: he walks away from the camera, pauses, wanders back, throws his notebook away into the mud, walks in, slips, and lands in the mud.

We then see him in the Colonel's quarters. Losey's camera again leaves him "free" to wander about, feeling his way into different attitudes. We see the Colonel propped up in profile at the side of the frame, still and serene. He tells Hargreaves to pull himself together. Hargreaves: "Pull yourself together, pull yourself together, you're just like the bloody doctor." What is more, he himself

has said to Hamp, at their first interview, "Pull yourself together, will you". Once again, Hargreaves is being symbolically put in Hamp's position.

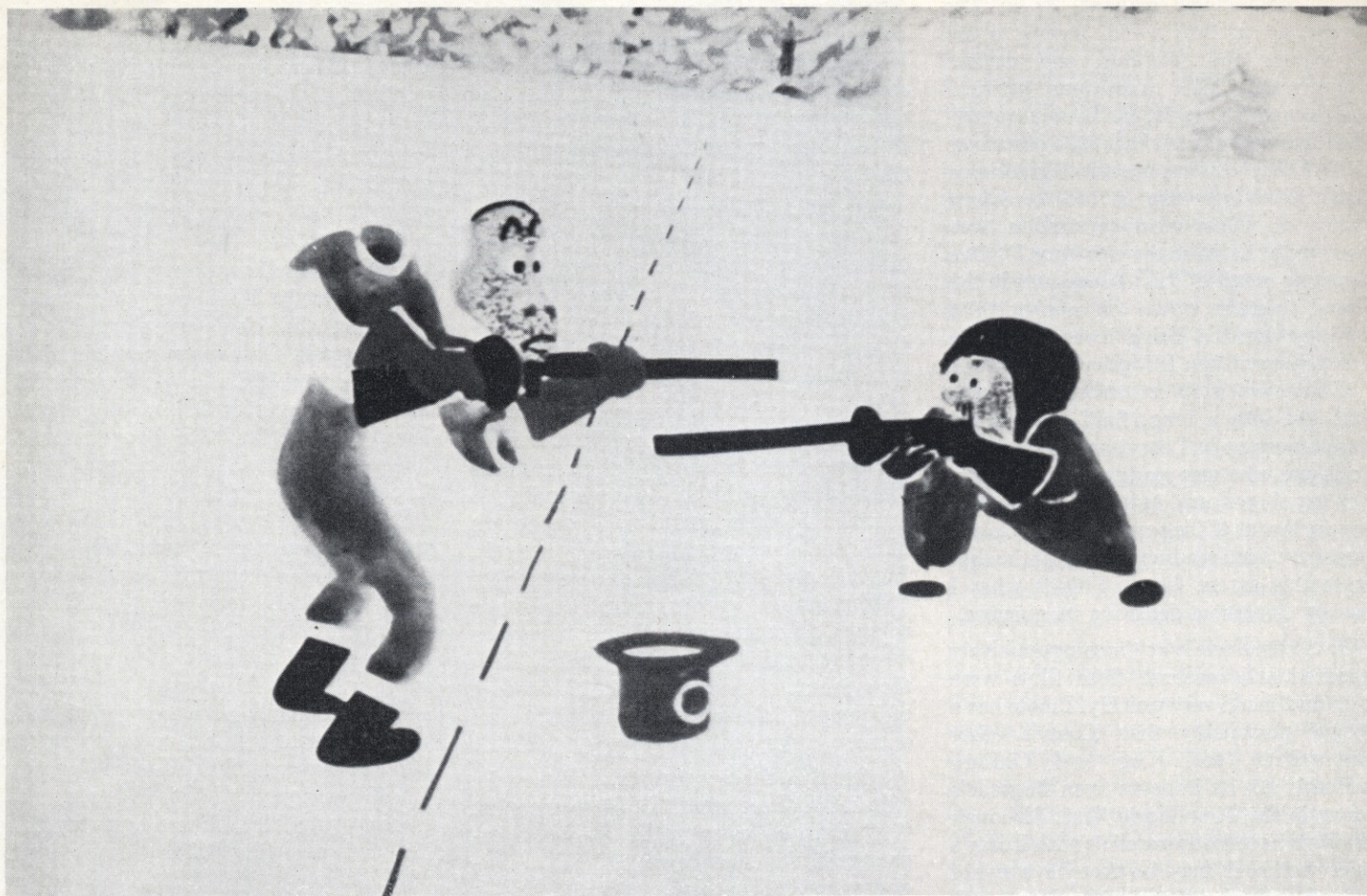
He goes on to make his most radical criticism of the whole of the "idiotic rigmarole". The Colonel takes refuge in no arguments, only in some resigned, bad romantic verse.

One could refer again to King Lear, who has for decades lived in a fool's paradise, mistaking the king's-eye-view of things for the truth. Only when he finds himself actually living like a beggar does he realise how hollow society is, and its system of laws and authority. "Oh I have ta'en/Too little care of this. Take physic, pomp;/ Expose thyself to what the wretches feel. . ." Hargreaves goes through this process in miniature, gradually getting drawn into intellectual and physical *sympathy*—in the literal sense—with Hamp. A comparison with *The Dividing Line* (made by Losey in America in 1950, also known as *The Lawless*) is useful. This has McDonald Carey as a newspaper editor who is content, at first, to fit uncritically into the pattern of small-town American life. When a young Mexican is victimised by racial prejudice, he won't go very far in his defence. The turning-point comes when he is actually shot at by the townspeople, who have mistaken him for the boy (Bogarde's fall in the mud is a symbolic equivalent of this). The film, reflecting Losey's Marxist sympathies, relates the trouble to the state of society as a whole. (cf *The Criminal*). Piecemeal liberal gestures are useless. Losey's radicalism is totally unsentimental. Instead of prescribing "Love thy Neighbour", the strongest liberal character insists "Sleepy Hollow (the run-down Mexican quarter of the town) shouldn't have been there in the first place". McDonald Carey hears the police instructions "Don't shoot unless you have to", and asks "Why shoot at all?"

Hargreaves learns that only this kind of solution can be valid, but in his situation such a solution is impossible. In *The Dividing Line* the individual can help change his society. In *King and Country* he is helpless: he can't change the army, or change the war. The feeling at the end is not of hope, nor of tragic waste, but just of futility and moral confusion, and the action finishes on an image of bitter hopelessness: the lower half of Hargreaves's body, revolver hanging limply from his hand, as he walks away, boots through mud; in the foreground, Hamp's feet, twitching in death, "frozen" into an image recalling that of the sculptured war memorial.

Charles Barr





The 1964 Tours Festival of short films reaped a harvest way above the average level of stylistic competence, though the sparks of inspiration never promised to start a forest fire. The lack of a really new urge was not surprising, with the short currently squeezed between the new artistic freedom open to features on one hand, and TV on the other. Still, a certain monotony of style among the documentaries suggested that young film makers from China to Peru were stylistic cats drowning in the cream of Resnaisism. Ever more agile cameras and emulsions have been developing their directors' eyes for nice formal patterns. The Japanese *Ishi No Uta* (*Song of the Stones*) photographs stacked slabs of stones so as to make nice Piet Mondrian compositions. The Polish *Gora* (*The Mountain*) dwells on grains of sugar scattered against strikingly patterned wood. 1964 was the year of photographic succulence, and directors are all but unanimously agreed that they can spend endless time on any detail, however meaningless, either because it's 'beautiful' in itself or because it suggests vague metaphysical profundities (usually 'alienation' borrowed from Antonioni), or because it reminds them of the *nouveau roman* of Robbe-Grillet. Artistic effects with zooms and sudden 'freezes' were a dime a dozen (their best use being in a Rumanian tribute to *George*

*Georgescu*, the orchestral conductor.)

Most of the films dispensed with commentary and used music with the utmost sparseness; several added to this near-silence virtual immobility, and consisted either exclusively (*Eugene Atget*, U.S.A., *Ishi No Uta*, Japan), or largely (*Nuit Noir Calcutta*) of successive photograms—a sort of catatonic cinema. Too often montage, a storyline and humanism went by the board. To all this was added an apparent determination to leave every image on the screen as long as possible. But any film maker who wishes to avoid boring his audience must know how to evoke the experience of boredom, endlessness or 'deep meaning' as concisely and vividly as he evokes any other emotion, and many films, instead of hammering their experience home, just hammered most people to sleep. On the topic of aesthetic preciousness I propose to be cruel to be kind, since a great deal of talent shunts itself into this *cul-de-sac*.

Toshio Matsumoto's *Ishi No Uta* consists of about 1,000 austere photos of a stone quarry edited into what was probably the most hated film of the Festival. Though it ran a mere 24 minutes, several paper aeroplanes were sailing forlornly round the auditorium long before the end, and while one deprecates such bad manners, it has to be admitted that by com-

parison with this, the average Bresson film is as broad and hectic as an Aldwych farce. Robert James Lewis's *Ab Origine* (U.S.A.), evoking the alarms and terrors of pigeons chased from the fields or tracked by cats in attics, is a photographic *tour-de-force*, both in obtaining its superbly composed shots and in the colour succulence with which it catches the glint and glow of birds' eyes and plumage, rusty cans and cat's fur. It has an amazing first-person zoom as a terrified bird soars up against a dazzling blue skylight. This visual gourmety is rather at odds with the film's theme; and the editor doesn't know what any Hollywood film demonstrates—that the slowest witted spectator needs only one shot to grasp a point. To insist on using six where one would do and two would already be lyrical, isn't 'lyricism' but tedium. Within the fat footage, there's a brilliant and disturbing film.

Almost as gorgeous is Jacques Godbout's and Francoise Bufold's *Le Monde Va Nous Prendre Pour Des Sauvages* (*The World Will Take Us For Savages*, Canada). In a Canadian village Red Indian children make elaborate paper dolls which they hide from visitors because *T.w.w.t.u.f.s.* At the end of the film we still have no idea of what meaning these dolls have for their makers; instead of useful, specific study, we are fobbed off with a blend of formalism and

Still: The two sentries face each other across the frontier in John Hubley's *The Hat*.

vague 'profundity'. Walter Jacob's *Shibam, Stadt in Sudarabien* (Germany) shows us a Saudi-Arabian town whose 8-storey mud buildings curiously recall the expressionist skyscrapers of *Metropolis*. Its forceful black-and-whites never quite shake free of *Three Dawns to Sydney*-type exoticism. The Bulgarians and the Iranians celebrate mechanisation with Liudmila Chichkova's *Machinen Koncert* and the Golestan Film Unit's *Des Elements*, films not unworthy of the Joris Ivens school, though the spectators booed when the Persian sun set in time-lapse jerks. I suspect the director may have been surreptitiously slipping in a warning against the potential inhumanity of industrial routines.

Not that the new artiness spared us the old-fashioned sort, typified by commentaries like "A thousand years have tiptoed through this shrine, prayerful as a devotee" (from *Jain Temples of India*) and "Out of eternity emerges the spirit of man with its unfathomable mysteries"—(from Renk Duvariari *Walls of Colour*) to name two interesting films which aren't improved by such tiptoeing for the absolute.

The Communist documentaries were a rather pedestrian bunch. Eisenstein fans may find a macabre



# TOURS 64

thrill in *Secrets of the Past*, about a Russian Professor exhuming the remains of Ivan the Terrible and reconstructing his face and character from the skeleton. *The Cardiac Stimulator*, a tribute to Russian medical science, concludes with the surgeon restarting a stopped heart—by giving it a couple of quick pokes with his finger. Both films inadvertently suggest the authoritarian cult of personality pervading Russian society: the chiefs of Research Teams are all-wise, all-initiating. The Chinese sent an instructional for children, *The Protection of Frogs*. There is an undeniable charm and fascination about its blend of “True Life Adventure” shots and even its moral earnestness (“Call Up the Frogs”).

Ballet and photography dominated the cultural documentaries. There is, I suppose, a steady demand for films about ballet-struck young girls being drilled to become ballerinas, though I’ve yet to see one which said as much as Jacques Baratier’s *Métier de Danseur*. Novena Tocheva’s *Etude* (Hungary) is no exception, nor, really is Dominique Delouche’s *L’Adage* (France), though the latter’s use of oval masking, ‘freezing’, multiple-image, slow-motion and smoky décor enable it to recreate the turgid romanticism of the last century. Both films have a few minutes of very beautiful dancing: a Hungarian ballerina

with a body as muscular as a navy’s yet whose movements have a poignant grace puts new heart into that spavined old warhorse, ‘Swan Lake’. A merely competent German colour tribute to *Max Ernst* lets through something of the painter’s brilliance. Harold Becker’s, the second most immobile film of the festival, matches photographs by Eugene Atget (U.S.A.) to Erik Satie’s *Trois Gymnopédies*; the sparse beauty of this combination perhaps overstates the note of Proustian melancholy, linking it to Evald Schorm’s *Zit Sivy Zivot* (*To Live One’s Life*, Czechoslovakia), a study of the reclusive photographer Josef Sudek whose studies of lost elegance are Ophuls screwed to the point of tragedy. The French *Apparences*, with its scintillating colour photography of 18th century dolls that *breathe* and *write*, stack up alongside Charles and Ray Eames’ *Toccata For Toy Trains*.

The documentaries of human interest were slightly disappointing. Three films evoked the pathos of lonely old age, but none were lacerating. Rob Houwer’s *Aanmelding* (*Registration*, Holland) vividly depicted a world so shiny and sterilised that people live existences as furtive as germs, but the *Eclisse*-style absence of central figure leads only to a non-exploration of her experience. John Krish’s *I Think They Call Him John*, (G.B.) a bas-relief of an old widower’s empty Sunday, is more poignant because it dwells almost continuously on his long, grave face and bulbous, alert eyes. But Krish, as full of conventional ‘goodwill’ as in *Our School*, plays the one note of loneliness so exclusively that the old man’s experience finally disappears in a haze of sterilised pathos. Though Jan Troell’s direction is at times crudely emphatic, *Johan Ekberg* (Sweden) is the best of the trio, because the most Zavattinian, examining varied aspects of its hero’s life and dreams.

Derrick Knight’s *A Time to Heal* (G.B.) deals with the rehabilitation of injured miners in a worthy, uninspired 37 minutes. Robert Menegoz’s *La Pièce d’Or* (*The Gold Coin*, France) neatly blends reconstructed scenes with hidden camerawork of the reactions of various Parisian passers-by to finding gold coins which are scattered abroad each year in accordance with an eccentric’s will. Glowing colour helps another of Menegoz’s Marxist meditations on the unity and disunion of individuals in modern society. Candid cameras come to the Moslem world in Kristo Skanata’s *Tamo Goje Prestaje Zakon* (*Where No Law Is*), an indictment of the still-wretched lot of women among Yugoslavia’s Muslims. Some spectators felt it an unusually honest admission that all isn’t hunky-dory in a Communist social scene.

Others thought that its underlying motive was a party-line attack on religion. At any rate, it was a sober and honest reportage on a modern middle-ages. The liveliest of this group was Giuseppe Ferrara’s *La Madone di Gela* (*The Gela Madonna*, Italy) where shining colour and exhilarating sweeps of the camera contrasted the religious fervour of Italian peasants with shapes and forms of industrialisation—and ideological emancipation.

Whether the “documentary” qualifies as “cinéma-vérité” is interminably debatable: the former, I suggest, is subordinate to a story-or thesis-line, the latter looks for more diffuse types of content and seeks to show complexities as they are expressed in life rather than by “the medium”. Through a concealed camera set in time-lapse, Yoji Kuri’s *The Chair* (Japan) offers a quick-motion study of people’s tics and shifts as they sit on a chair waiting for an interview. Slightly repetitive at ten minutes, its picture of human nervousness is intriguing enough to provoke the thought revealing it through a greater diversity of situations. *La Cage Aux Oiseaux* (*The Bird Cage*), by Jean-Claude Averty, France’s (unconvincing) answer to David Frost, invites us to snicker at cabaret provided by a club of aged eccentrics in a Paris cafe. Had he been more compassionate than he knows how, it might have been as embarrassing as Averty had wanted. Jon Wing Lum’s *Year of the Rat* (U.S.A.), a camera-in-the-streets study of New York’s Chinatown celebrating Chinese New Year, would have been better cut by three quarters and run as an item in *Tonight*.

The Jury’s Grand Prix went to the best cinéma-vérité film, William Klein’s *Cassius Le Grand* (France), a reportage on the pricklier issues raised by the Clay-Liston bout. This emphasises the role of the consortium of white millionaires in sponsoring Clay, as if he were less the hero he thinks he is than a new moneymaking product to be launched on the market, the human equivalent of a new detergent. Its cynical streaks are far from depressing, because of the pace, gusto and presence of everyone from the gladiators themselves to officials quarrelling over the choice of referee. I had followed the match with bated breath at the time, but to French viewers the inside view of the American boxing world came like a flurry of punches from the great Cassius himself. Some people accused the Jury of having chosen an anti-American film out of eagerness to please General de Gaulle, others of having chosen an anti-negro film out of colour prejudice, so all ways the film was excitingly controversial. Fans of *L’il Abner* will be fascinated to meet one Evil Eye Finkel self-

styled “No. 1 Hex Man of the Sporting World”. This should make an excellent film to have around when Sonny and Cassius meet again. It makes an interesting counterpoint to the Hungarian *58 seconds*, a study of the dehumanisation, through training, of an olympics swimmer—who loses his race.

The best of the fiction entries was Roland Klick’s *Ludwig* (Germany) depicting a group of peasant lads deep in the German countryside and the easy slide of their empty leisure into a pattern of bullying. We first see Ludwig idly burning an insect with his cigarette-end while his friends train a burning-glass on him—he becomes an insect too. At first he seems a village simpleton; gradually we feel he merely has a sensitivity that the others haven’t, useless to him because undirected. It might be called *We Are the Landsvolk Boys*, and complements *Young Torless*; those who see the roots of German destructiveness plunging as deeply as ever into the German character will find the film relevant to their case. It is a model of what our ‘free cinema’ could have been, but never was, because an understanding of ordinary human emotion was never there. It’s also a welcome change from the formalism besetting the post-Resnais documentary.

The ghost of the B.F.I. Experimental Fund walked again in Christopher Mason’s *Christmas Rose* (presented by British publisher Anthony Blond) which has photography not just grainy but positively furry. Its study of a Brief Encounter between a plain, middle-class, middle-aged hospital sister and a virile young carpark attendant with yobo sidewhiskers got us little further than the inevitable weeping walk past ironically bright advertising signs. Still, a meeting in a pub is handled with a sense of *mise-en-scène à la* Wyler that hints at a potential for better things. Several French spectators thought the film very courageous in its handling of ‘embarrassing’ emotion. Perhaps they still haven’t realised how courageous in this range the British cinema has become over the last five years.

All that is cornily fashionable in French cinema was shared between Olivier Gerard’s *Un Matin de Soleil* and Marin Karmitz’s *Nuit Noir Calcutta*. The first recounts two delinquents’ escape from detention, inspired by sighting the white luxury liner they have seen in an exotic port in a film. When the weaker lad injures his leg, however, the other refuses to escape without him. The first sequence, adroitly mixing colour (for the film-within-the-film) and monochrome (for reality), catches a little of the magic of the Emmanuel Robles story, but its acting is overheated and in the end the film is just a clumsy mixture of



a Robert Hossein thriller with the innumerable counterfeits of "Quai des Brumes". The second film, scripted by Marguerite Duras, shows a novelist with a 'block' and innumerable bottles of Scotch strolling round a cold damp seaside town not meeting an equally melancholy blonde. He is trying to write a story about a diplomat who strolls around exotic Calcutta and meets a melancholy blonde. The photography is sensitive, the faces often have a lacerating eloquence, but the poses become so exaggerated, the bottles so numerous, the non-meetings so stylised, that the final result is as if Duras, Antonioni and Françoise Sagan had got together to concoct a virulent self-parody. These young directors are better formalists than humanists.

Paul Verhoeven's *Het Feest!* (Party!, Holland), is a sweet-and-bitter trifle about a schoolboy who gets a crush on a sulky-faced little schoolgirl. It shows an easygoing responsiveness to people which comes as a delight after so much preciosity. In fact the Festival audience gave a rapturous reception to the Organising Committee's annual selection of advertising films, which demonstrated the power of pace and brevity, and between them earned round upon round of applause.

A spattering of burlesques also relaxed the atmosphere. Pierre Etaix's *Insomnie* (France), is a little mechanical, but quite amusing enough. We 'see' the vampire story our insomniac (Etaix) is reading, and when he shakes with fright the image shakes too. It's a comment on audience psychology that, despite the burlesque content, several intelligent spectators were visibly carried away by the book-within-the-film.

Cultural satire of another sort was represented by two admirable French films, *Les Oiseaux Sont Des Cons*, is a montage, by the cartoonist Chaval, of drawings of weird and disgruntled birds. One looks vaguely, uncensorably, but unmistakably like de Gaulle. Over these a commentary rattles out a series of insults at our feathered friends. These insults are also designed to reiterate the French slang word 'con', which approximates in meaning to our English 'c - - t', though it also means 'incredibly stupid' and is equivalent in strength to 'b - m'. The final effect is, oddly, both subversive and cleansing, and I regret that the film is untranslatable, because its three minutes are hilarious. Adorable, too, is Julien Pappé's *Sophie et les Gammes* (*Sophie's Scales*), about a quiet little girl, who doesn't like her music lessons. By a combination of wrong notes in her scales and immaculately pounded boogie-woogie, she terrorises not only her music teacher but even portraits of Chopin and Beethoven. Live actors perform in perfect 'cartoon' style

before painted *décor*, creating a splendid symbiosis of the genres. Despite one or two facilities, it sharpens the barb of Goonery. The vulgar tones of violet and carrot are a perfect foil for its sermon on the perils of pedagogy; and Sophie's well-adjusted coldness, her prudent absence of romantic feeling (symbolised by the 'lonesome whistle' of a passing locomotive) have a very disturbing quality.

Pointed political satire was exemplified by Derek Hill's *Parade* (G.B.) and by René Laloux's *Les Temps Morts*. The first intercuts clips of authority on parade with authority at work, for example London bobbies following the band, and then battering Aldermaston Marchers. The point is made with neither subtlety, nor, really, maturity. The French film is altogether more creative, interspersing cinéma-vérité footage of a bullfighter's death, Japanese children playing with toy pistols, and so on, with slightly animated drawings by the Surrealist artist Topor. His macabre cartoons of human legs piled up like logs, or of babes crawling towards headless, armless and legless maternal torsos have a kinky, yet tragic point and power, compelling reference to Goya and Masereel. *Les Temps Morts* suggests how the British cartoon could, without losing inventiveness, get out of the rut of biographic whimsy.

Abstract films were sparse and stodgy. Piotr Kamler and André Voisin's *Hiver* (France) matches wintry blues and whites and a couple of moony yellow patches with Vivaldi's music, which remains as obstinately self-contained as the images are dull and pretty. John Whitney's livelier *Catalogue* (U.S.A.) mixes everything from Indian music to boogie-woogie to a kaleidoscope of letters, spiral nebulae and streptococci. The inconsequentiality sounds cheerful enough, but finally suggests the nightmare of a wallpaper-hanger with Welsh rarebit lying heavy on his stomach. Mark Novak's *Csendelet* (*Still Life*, Hungary) contrasts the ineluctable 'frozen' images with objects in motion—despite precious editing, the film has an edge to it. Norman McLaren's *Canon* (Canada), a jolly if protracted joke with multiple images of a man in motion, is another example of McLaren's exaggerated lack of ambition. Considering he made the abstract cinema's biggest breakthrough with *Begone Dull Care*, this is cause for regret. It's as if he's inherited John Grierson's dogmatic contempt for artistic possibilities.

The important new trend to emerge from the Festival was in the cartoon: 'comic' cartoons were outnumbered 2 to 1 by 'serious' cartoons. Of the facetious pieces, Robert Balser's *El Sombrero* (Spain) locates foreground action in the

Pintoff style—a Bristow-type man trying to pick up a hat-shaped status-symbol—against black-and-white background cameos which catch the zany simplicity of Felix-the-Cat.

John Hubley's *The Hat* (U.S.A.) has two sentries facing each other across a dotted line, armed to the tonsils and as reciprocally paranoid as Goldwater and Stalin. They get talking when one man's cap falls into the other's territory, and end up concluding that an International Law would be a good thing. The thesis is schematic, and too obviously true to be interesting; instead of exploring, Hubley has merely decorated with an improvised dialogue between Dizzy Gillespie and Dudley (Beyond the Fringe) Moore, and with those soft painterly forms, that make all his films so magical. Their wistful beauty doesn't escape the range of near-sentimental harmonies, while the commentary too easily dismisses the endless list of legitimate difficulties. Thus the thought is tainted by 'Woodrow Wilsonism'. But the film is visually as felicitous as it is likeable.

Another American morality-piece, Paul Julian and Les Goldman's *Hangman*, illustrates in stills a macabre poem by Maurice Ogden: a diabolical hangman exterminates, one by one, an entire town of pusillanimous citizens. This may sound corny in summary and certainly, after so many moralists have laboured in so many media to make us feel pangs of guilt for everything that happens anywhere, I sometimes feel like proclaiming to the world that, as of now, I propose to feel innocent about the deaths of anyone whom I didn't kill personally. But the film has the strength of the American folk ballad tradition behind it: the draughtsmanship is stark and evocative and it works rather better than U.P.A.'s *Tell-Tale Heart*.

The Communist world sent us two morally simpler pieces, Hou Hsiang-Houa's *Near Enough* and Jorge Carruana's *El Gallito de Papel* (*The Paper Toy*). The Chinese film is a little fable about a boy archer and a wolf, proving that a miss is as good as a mile. The Cuban film is a pleasant if enigmatic allegory about a bad black thing chasing a good white one. Perhaps it's about capitalist warmongers hounding the dove of revolution, but since the bad black thing at one point turns into a rocket one wonders if the film isn't a veiled protest against one aspect of Castroism.

Three cartoons splendidly asserted the rise of a new 'Mitteleuropean' expressionism. Kazimierz Urbanski's *Moto Gaz* (Poland) begins like a Shell history of transportation but con-

cludes in a witty but gloomy vision of the world smothered in petrol-fumes. Jan Svankmajer's *Posledni Trik Pana Schwarzwald* (*A Pana Edgara* (*The Last Trick of Mr. Schwarzwald and Mr. Edgar*, Czechoslovakia) is a savage, comic account of two entertainers vying with each other's tricks, finally disintegrating into a paroxysm of mutual self-destruction. One doffs his hat and the top of his head to reveal the machinery grinding within, while the other's torso contains a violin and all the sentimental knick-knackery of the other culture. This strange blend of Tom-and-Jerry and Ionesco evokes a civilisation where the humanity of man dissolves in a welter of habits, skills and tricks. I can't think of a better cartoon to illustrate the denunciations of current culture, R. D. Laing and other existentialist psychologists. In the Chaplin tradition, the film is as entertaining as it is haunting.

But for most spectators the film of the Festival was undoubtedly Walerian Borowczyk's *Les Jeu Des Anges* (*Angle Games*, France). Its first 'movement' is a fast 'tracking' shot along a cross-section of dark geological strata, relieved only by a long low gallery of yellow light along the bottom of the screen. The camera then moves across and down a honeycomb of galleries and cells, in which isolated objects and noises suggest the torture and dismemberment of icily innocent angelic creatures. Rivulets of blue blood lace a stack of angels' wings; the walls are pierced with tubes which resemble both organpipes and severed arteries; the soundtrack is a pounding conglomeration of organ music and sawing noises. The film is in some ways reminiscent of Resnais—in its camera-movements, in its emotionally dynamic blend of formalism and suggestion, and in its 'concentrationary universe'. But it surpasses Resnais's films in the quality of delirium, generating in the spectator a paroxysm of that exhilarated dread, one of the strangest and most overwhelming of aesthetic emotions.

The Jury's Special X Awards went to this film (which also won the Critics' Prize), as well as to *Tamo Goje Prestaje Zakon* and to *The Hat*. Its award for the best first film went to Jan Svankmajer's cartoon, and the Grand Prix to *Cassius Le Grand*. The B.E.C.'s Prize for the best children's film was shared between *Near Enough* and *Naika*, which official functions prevented me from seeing. The French Producers' prize went to *Ludwig*.

I should perhaps say that this account of the films expresses a purely personal approach. It in no way involves other members of the Jury, or the Jury as a whole.

Raymond Durnat



# JEAN -LUC GODDARD

## INTERVIEWS

### MICHEL ANGELO ANTONIONI

*In relation to L'Avventura, La Notte and L'Eclisse, Deserto Rosso seems to me to be the conscious or unconscious summit of what you have achieved in the previous three films. Your art has now reached a new place, the Red Desert which, though it is a desert for the woman, is for you a fulfilment and completion. The other films seemed to be looking for something and advancing towards it in a straight line, but Deserto Rosso seems to be more of an entity, a film about the world as a whole, not just about contemporary life—though this already appears in L'Eclisse. I find it difficult to discuss a film which I have only just completed. I'm still too involved with my original purposes in making it. I'm not clear enough about it and don't have the detachment necessary to make an assessment. However, I do feel that it is the logical outcome of these other*

films, of the sort of analysis of the emotions which has been occupying me. Now that is all finished and done with, and I am trying to discover something new.

Whereas in the earlier films I was interested in relationships between individuals, I am now concerned with the individual in relation to his surroundings, (though not with this alone), which means that I have a very different approach to the story. It is too easy to say, as some critics have, that I am accusing the world of industry, factories, etc. of turning the people who live there into neurotics. My intention (although one cannot anticipate the final result, in spite of having a definite starting point) was to point out the beauty in this world, where even the factories have an extraordinary aesthetic beauty. A line of factories, with their chimneys silhouetted

on the skyline, seem to me much more beautiful than a line of trees which one has seen so often that it has become monotonous, to such an extent that we don't even look any more. This is a beautiful world; rich, alive, and more important, useful. I feel that the neuroses are not a product simply of the environment, but the result of a lack of adaptation. Some people have managed to adapt themselves, others have not and are too bound up with structures or rhythms of life which are outmoded. The character of Giuliana is like this. Her neurotic state is caused by the gulf she feels between her own sensibility, intelligence and way of life, (her psychology in fact) and the rhythm which

*Still: Deserto Rosso. Monica Vitti, Xenia Valderi and Richard Harris.*





is imposed upon her. It is a psychological crisis involving not only her external relationship with the world, the effect certain sounds and colours have on her, the coldness and lack of sympathy of the people who surround her, but also her personal system of values. None of these, whether educational, moral or religious, prove of any help to her. She is in the position of having to reshape herself entirely as a woman. This is in effect what the film is about.

*How does the episode where she tells the little boy a story fit in?*

I found myself faced with this purely narrative episode. We have the mother with her son who is ill. She wants to tell him a story, but he has already heard all the ones she knows, so she has to make one up. Given Giuliana's psychological make-up, it seemed natural to me that she should, unconsciously, turn this story into a kind of reaction against and escape from reality, and create a world where nature predominates and where there is a peace and serenity which she has in part forgotten: the blue sea and the pink sand. The rocks themselves take on human form, embrace her and sing sweetly..

Do you remember the scene in the bedroom, with Corrado? Leaning against the wall, she says: "Do you know what I'd like? . . . Everyone who has loved me . . . to have them here, around me, like a wall". In fact, she needs them to help her live, because she's afraid that she can't make it alone.

*The story could equally well be a dream or phantasy of the woman herself?*

Yes, certainly. After all, it's a product of her imagination. It's a further manifestation of this difficulty she has in adapting herself to her surroundings.

*Giuliana's neurotic state is sometimes presented as a simple product of her environment, but the environment in fact only reveals something which is already an inherent part of her character.*

Giuliana's environment only serves to accelerate the emotional crisis, but the psychological state of the character must already be fertile ground for its development. It is not easy to determine the causes and origins of neuroses: the symptoms are many and varied. The symptoms of real schizophrenia are often very similar to those of a purely neurotic state. But I think it's through the abnormalities in a character that any given situation can best be clarified. I have been accused of choosing a pathological case, but if I had taken a normal, well-adjusted woman there would have been no real problems—these only appear in people who cannot adjust themselves.

*There seem already to be traces of the neuroses which appear in Deserto Rosso in*

*the character of Monica Vitta in L'Eclisse.* Oh no. The character of Vittoria in *L'Eclisse* is the complete antithesis of that of Giuliana. In *L'Eclisse*, Vittoria is a calm well-balanced girl who knows why she acts as she does. She is not remotely neurotic. The crisis in *L'Eclisse* is an emotional one, while in *Deserto Rosso* the emotions are already established fact. Besides, Giuliana's relationship with her husband is quite normal. If you asked her: "Do you love your husband?", she would say yes. Right up to the moment when she tries to commit suicide, her crisis is subconscious and invisible. I do want to stress that it is not the environment which is responsible for the crisis: it only makes it apparent. You might get the impression from this that these neuroses can exist only within this particular environment, which is obviously not true. Wherever you live—Casa Nova, Rome, Milan—the same situation arises. This is because people have the same attitudes and the same way of life. Even though we may not realise it, our lives are dominated by industry. Industry not only in the sense of factories, but, more important, products. These products are everywhere. Our own houses are full of them—brightly coloured objects made of plastic or other materials only recently discovered. They follow us wherever we go and, although we may live far from the factories, they represent a way of life and they influence our own. Largely through advertising campaigns aimed increasingly at the psychological and subconscious side of our nature, they have become an obsession.

*Doesn't the beauty of the modern world, as*

*expressed in Deserto Rosso, after all provide the solution of the psychological problems of the characters?*

We must not underestimate the problems of men living under modern conditions. I don't believe that the beauty of the modern world alone can solve our problems. I do think, however, that once we have adapted ourselves to a new way of life we may find new solutions to these problems. But why am I discussing this? I'm not a philosopher, and I don't see what all this has to do with making films.

*Take for example the presence of the robot in the little boy's room. Is this beneficial or detrimental to the child?*

I think it's beneficial because, through playing with toys of this kind, he will adapt himself well to the life in store for him. This brings us back to what we've just been talking about. Toys are a product of industry which, in this way, influences even children's education.

I am still amazed by a conversation I had with a professor of cybernetics at Milan University, Silvio Ceccato, who is considered a sort of Einstein by the Americans. He is a marvellous man who has invented a machine which can see and describe, drive a car, comment on points of view, whether aesthetic, ethical, or literary, and so on. It has nothing to do with television: it's a wonderful electronic brain. This man, who is extraordinarily lucid, never used a single technical word, which I might not have understood, in the course of our conversation. But after a few minutes I was completely lost. He repeated what he'd said, trying to explain it in my idiom, but found himself at a loss. Beside







Stills: Deserto Rosso. Opposite page, Monica Vitti. Above: Richard Harris with factory workers he is trying to persuade to work in Patagonia.

him was his secretary, an attractive girl of about 24 or 25 of middle-class origin, and she understood him perfectly. In Italy it is normally girls of only average intelligence and who have not had any higher education who prepare the programmes for electronic brains: the type of reasoning required for this comes naturally to them, while for someone like myself it's impossible.

Another brilliant man, an American Robert M. Stewart, came to see me in Rome six months ago. He had invented a chemical brain and was going to a cybernetics congress in Naples to announce his discovery—it is one of the most extraordinary ever made. It's a little box, mounted on tubes: inside are cells whose components include gold mixed with other substances. These live in a chemical liquid, they have an autonomous existence and react in the most curious way. For example, if you go into the room, the cell will take a certain form, if I go in it will take on an entirely different one. In that little box there are just millions of these cells, but from them one can reconstruct a human brain. This man feeds them and makes them sleep. . . . He talked to me about all this and it seemed quite clear but so incredible that after a time I couldn't follow him any more. By contrast, the child who plays with robots from infancy will understand perfectly, and he'll have no trouble in shooting into space in a rocket if he feels so inclined. I am very envious of all this, and would love to be

in this new world now. Unfortunately we aren't there yet—a grave problem for several generations, mine, yours, and the post-war one. I think there will be violent changes in years to come, both in the world and in the psychology of the individual. The present crisis arises from this confusion of the spirit, of conscience, of faith and of politics; these are the symptoms of the changes to come. So I was wondering "What should the cinema have to say about all this?" And I decided that I should tell a story which takes a look at the things we have been talking about.

*But the heroes in this film are surely integrated with this mentality: they are engineers, and belong to this world. . .*

Not all of them. The character of Richard Harris is an almost romantic one: he considers escaping to Patagonia, because he can't fit in. He escapes, and thinks his problems are at an end. What he doesn't realise is that they are not outside him but inside. This becomes all too apparent in the film where a meeting with a woman can provoke a crisis—he is so upset by this that he is no longer sure whether he will leave or not.

One part of the film is an accusation against the old world: when Giuliana has need of help in her psychological crisis, she finds a man who takes advantage of her and of her state of mind. It is the old world, her world which is upsetting her. If she had met someone like her husband he might have acted differently. But in this instance it is her own world which betrays her.

*Will she become like her husband after the end of the film?*

I think that, through her efforts to come to grips with reality, she will reach a compromise. Neurotics have crises, but they also have lucid moments and these can last a lifetime. She may find a compromise, but the neuroses remain a part of her. I have tried to show the continuity of her neurotic state in the slightly soft-focus pictures. Anyhow, she is in a fairly static phase. As for what she will become, I should have to make another film to find out.

*Do you think that an awareness of this new world has repercussions on aesthetics and on the artist's concepts?*

Yes, I think so. It changes one's way of looking and thinking. Everything changes. Pop-Art is one aspect of the search for something new, which shouldn't be underestimated. It's an ironical movement, and this conscious irony is extremely important. Pop-Art painters are quite aware that the aesthetic value of their work is not fully developed—apart from Rauschenberg, who is more of an artist than the others. Basically, I think it's a good thing that all this should come out; it will help speed up the process of transformation.

*Obviously a child can't appreciate this, but do you think the scientist feels the same as us? Does he think as we do about the modern world?*

I asked Stewart, the inventor of the chemical brain, about this. He replied that his specialised work certainly had repercussions on his private life, so that his problems, even family ones, are solved differently than they would be without this influence.

*How do you feel about Deserto Rosso as compared to the other films you've made?*

It is, as I said earlier, an attempt to clarify certain problems in the world today that I should like to be able to pin down. If we are not concerned with the same things now as we were after the war, it's because the world around us has changed, and also because we ourselves have changed, and have different requirements, ideas and interests. Immediately after the war there was a great deal to talk about, in particular man's social condition. Today all that is over and done with and we are interested in new themes, those we have been discussing. I do not yet know how we can attack them or how they should be presented, but I have tried to develop one of them in *Deserto Rosso*, though I've by no means exhausted the subject. This is only the beginning of a series of problems and aspects of our contemporary society and our way of life.

Besides, you too, Godard, make very modern films—your treatment of your subjects shows a strong tendency to break with the past.

*When you begin or end certain shots on more or less abstract shapes, objects or details, do*



you do it for pictorial reasons?

I feel I must express reality in terms that are not completely realistic. Take for instance the abstract white line which comes into the shot at the beginning of the scene in the little grey street. This line interests me much more than the car which arrives: it's a way of approaching the character through material objects rather than through her life. Her life basically is only relatively interesting. She, as a character, is incorporated in the story because of her femininity: her appearance and the essentially feminine side of her are what concern me. It's precisely for this reason that I wanted the role to be played in a rather static way.

*This, too, seems to show a break-away from your other films.*

Yes, it's a less realistic film, from the figurative point of view. At least, it's realistic in a different way. For instance, I used a telefoto lens a great deal so as not to have any depth of field, which is in itself an indispensable element of realism. At the moment I am only interested in putting the character in contact with things, because nowadays it's material objects which are important. I don't consider *Deserto Rosso* an end in itself—it is research. I want to tell different stories in different ways. Everything that has been done up to the present, and everything I've done myself, is no longer relevant, it doesn't interest me. Perhaps you feel the same way?

*Was filming in colour an important change for you?*

Very important. I had to change my whole technique, though not only because I was using colour. I had in any case to change my technique, for reasons we have already discussed. With colour you use different lenses. I noticed too that certain camera movements did not have the required effect: for instance, a rapid panning shot is effective with bright red, but no use with dirty green, unless you are looking for an unusual effect. I think there is a *rapport* between camera movements and colour. A single film is not sufficient to get to the root of the matter, because it's a problem worth examining. In this connection, I had made some very interesting experiments on 16 mm. but I wasn't able to use all of the effects I'd discovered in this film. You're too pushed when it comes to the point.

There is a psycho-physiology of colour, and some experiments and research have been done on this. We painted the interior of the factory shown in the film in red—a fortnight later, all the workmen were quarrelling. We repainted it in pale green, and all was peace again. The eyes must relax.

*How did you choose the colours for the shop?*

I had to choose between hot and cold colours. Giuliana needs cold colours for her shop: these are the ones which affect the exhibited articles least. If you paint a wall orange, the colour will kill any object near it, while if you paint it blue or pale green these colours will complement them. I wanted to contrast hot and cold colours: there is orange, yellow, and a brown ceiling, and my character realises that this doesn't suit her. *The original title of the film was Sky Blue and Green.* . . .

I abandoned that because it didn't seem to be a virile enough title, and it lacked subtlety, through laying too much stress on colour. I never considered colour *per se* at the outset. The film was created in colour, but I always thought first of what I wanted to say, as one does, and then used colour as a medium of expression. I never thought: I shall put blue and brown together. I painted the grass around the shed in the marshes to stress the feeling of desolation and death. I wanted to give a reality to the scenery: dead trees are this colour.

*In this case, the problem is no longer a psychological but a material one.*

It's the same thing.

*And all the shots of objects during the conversation on Patagonia.* . . .

That indicates a sort of distraction in the character. He is tired of listening to all these conversations, and is thinking of Giuliana. *I had the impression that the dialogue in Deserto Rosso was simpler and more functional than in your earlier films. Is this because its traditional role as commentary has been taken over by the colour?*

Yes, I think that's true. At least, the dialogue here is reduced to an absolute minimum and the colour is probably responsible for this. I would never have done the scene in the shed, where they are talking about drugs, stimulants, etc. without using red. I wouldn't have done it at all in black and white. The use of red puts the spectator in the right frame of mind for the dialogue. The colour is right for the characters (and they are justified by it), and for the spectators too.

*Do you feel that your art is nearer to that of the painter or the writer?*

I do have a lot in common with modern writing, but I don't find this a source of much inspiration—I am more interested in painting and scientific research, but I don't think they have a direct influence on my work. There is no pictorial experiment in this film and I think it is far removed from painting. And obviously painting has no narrative function, whereas a film does: this is the point at which experimental writing and painting come together.

*Did you rework the colour in the laboratory, as one can with Technicolor?*

I didn't rely on the laboratory at all while I was filming. I tried during the shooting to put the colours on the objects themselves, on the landscapes. I painted directly instead of altering the colour in the laboratory. All I expected then was a faithful reproduction of the effects I had obtained. This is not easy with Technicolor and it was a long and delicate process. One should not rely too much on the laboratory—it's not their fault but, technically, colour reproduction is a long way behind.

*Does Giuliana in your opinion actually see the colours as you show them?*

Some neurotics do see colours differently. Doctors have done some research on this subject, using mescaline for instance, in an attempt to discover what they really see. At one time, I did intend to produce some effects of this kind and I had also considered altering the colour of certain objects. However, I decided that tricks like this very quickly give an impression of artificiality, and there are much simpler ways of conveying what you want without this. So I eliminated these particular effects.

*Supposing Giuliana does see the colours as you show them, does she understand why this is so, and that it is inherent in her neurotic state?*

Yes, and this is one of the things which frighten her. It's strange, at the moment I'm talking to Godard, one of the most modern and most gifted directors of our time and a short while ago I was lunching with René Clair, one of the greatest directors of the past: the conversation was somewhat different. . . He is worried about the future of the cinema while we (I hope you agree) have complete confidence in it.

*What are you going to do now?*

I am going to do a sketch with Soraya. . . This interests me very much because I can continue the experiments with colour that I began in *Deserto Rosso*. After that I shall be making a film which interests me even more—provided, that is, I can find someone to produce it. . . And what are you going to do?

*I'm going to make a film not with Soraya, but with Eddie Constantine. He's got a very special sort of face—the face of a Martian, so in the first sequence of the film you see a man passing through an atomic cloud, then he comes out the other side, and it's Eddie Constantine. I don't know what happens next.*

*Antonioni was interviewed by Jean-Luc Godard with Jean-Louis Comolli, Francois Weyergans and Ian Cameron. The interview was tape-recorded at the Venice Film Festival and is translated from the original Italian and French by Elizabeth Kingsley-Rowe.*



# REVIEWS

## MAN'S FAVOURITE SPORT?

Ostensibly Howard Hawks's latest film, *Man's Favourite Sport?*, is a comedy about fishing. But the question mark which is appended to the title suggests that our favourite sport might conceivably lie in another direction. The last line of the Henry Mancini/Johnny Mercer song that we hear over the titles gives the game away: "Man's favourite sport is girls".

The title of the story from which the screenplay is taken confirms the ambiguous alliance between fish and girls in the mind of the "sportsman": it's called "The Girl Who Almost Got Away". The title backgrounds consist of a discreetly flashy montage of pin-ups in the manner of a spread in *Playboy* magazine, the sort of outdoor shots of playmates one finds alongside ads for fishing tackle, sports cars and hunting rifles. The combination of deep-polished décor and slightly rakish outdoor costumes might well have been modelled on advertisements in *Playboy*, which with Russell Harlan's elegant images of sun-tanned browns, translucent blues, and shining, shadowless, unlive-in interiors gives *Man's Favourite Sport?* a cool and expensive feel. Hawks's irony comes from the fact that the comic absurdity of the action and the helplessness of the hero are at odds with the sophisticated environment. The romantic almost irrational events don't live up to the ideals implied in the tidy, classical settings. Or is it the other way around?

As a salesman of fishing equipment Rock Hudson is very much in the *Playboy* mould, cool and expert. But when he is forced to enter a fishing competition he is hopelessly self-conscious and maladroit. Why? Because he's never actually fished before in his life. As a film actor Rock Hudson appears the ideal playboy (remember his apartment and womanising in *Pillow Talk*), but when it comes down to it in this film, we realise he doesn't understand women. He is constantly being made to look ridiculous by the three women in his life: his fiancée (Charlene Holt), the girl who delights in goading him (Paula Prentiss) and her friend (Maria Perschy). This last character is something of an enigma in the film: meant presumably as a quiet blonde counterpoint to the noisy brunette, Paula Prentiss, she never develops beyond the point of being a hanger-on, another thorn in the side of the hero.

Three women in his life, and three fish. During the competition Rock Hudson goes out on three successive days and each time accidentally hooks the three biggest fish, each one leading him a comic dance before it's netted. While it's funny watching a man struggling with a fish, it's pathetic watching him struggling with women. When I called *Man's Favourite Sport?* a comedy, I did not mean to preclude a tragic element, which it most certainly has. But comedy or tragedy? is not really a meaningful question to ask of a Hawks movie. The word which seems to me to describe accurately the tone of virtually all his movies is "ridiculous".

The Hawks hero is often a victim of the ridiculous in life. No one would deny that Rock Hudson in *Man's Favourite Sport?* is ridiculous, or Cary Grant in *Bringing up Baby* and *I Was A Male War Bride*. (Incidentally one misses the presence of Cary Grant in *Man's Favourite Sport?* as one misses on the script side Hawks's usual collaborators, Jules Furthman, Leigh Brackett and Charles Lederer.) But how about Gary Cooper in *Sergeant York* or Humphrey Bogart in *The Big Sleep*? In fact, Sergeant York the expert marksman who refuses to fight in the war, and Philip Marlowe the private eye caught up in an incomprehensible pattern of murders, are equally victims and heroes of the ridiculous. The fisherman who can't fish, the marksman who won't shoot and the detective who can't detect are variations on the same character. A man becomes a hero not simply by fighting or challenging a situation, but by fighting back against unreasonable odds. Dean Martin, the town drunk, in *Rio Bravo* spends most of the film on the receiving end of the action while his fully capable friend, John Wayne, stands by almost helpless. These men represent two sides of the Hawks hero: the amateur in a world of professionals and the professional in a world of amateurs.

If fish and girls represent the same challenge to Rock Hudson in *Man's Favourite Sport?* the common denominator in this relationship is water. In one scene Paula Prentiss and Maria Perschy swim across a lake underwater to surface near Rock Hudson as he's pitching his tent on the bank. They appear to him like two fish-women with their shiny rubber suits and flippers. They tease him as fish tease him: women can be as exasperating as fish. The sexual associations of water are well known and Hawks uses them for particularly ironic effect. Rain is traditionally good for fish: in *Man's*

*Favourite Sport?* it's also good for women. Rock Hudson and the two girls are in the forest as it starts to rain. The girls are wearing thin summer blouses, and as the rain beats harder the cloth gets wet and sticks to their bodies until. . . In the final sequences of the picture there is a thunderstorm in which Rock Hudson and Paula Prentiss are stranded on an island in the lake. It is night and after tiring themselves out arguing they fall asleep. The water rises and their tent and sleeping bags float away across the lake. The rain and rising water are instrumental in reconciling them: instead of riding off into the sunset at the end of the picture, the float away into the night.

The desire for a quiet life is often a characteristic of the Hawks hero, the reverse side of the man of action. Woman is traditionally the warrior's rest. However, women in *Man's Favourite Sport?* do not make for a quiet life. In this respect the movie is not dissimilar to *Tiger Shark* (1932), Hawks's previous fishing picture, in which the killer shark and the *femme fatale* are equally dangerous to the hero (Edward G. Robinson). He loses his wife to his best friend and his life to a shark. Rock Hudson's desire for a peaceful existence, after the fishing competition, is doomed. Firstly, he won the competition. Secondly, he got the girl. He is condemned, for the rest of his life, to fight fish and women: of course he can't swim so he has little chance against these water creatures. The sense of the endless struggle in *Man's Favourite Sport?* (and in other Hawks pictures too) has something of the dignity of the great symbolic fishing stories *Moby Dick* and *The Old Man and The Sea*.

Paul Mayersberg

Still: *The end of Man's Favourite Sport?* Rock Hudson and Paula Prentiss.







Still: *The Cheyenne women at the mouth of their sacred cave.*

## CHEYENNE AUTUMN

John Ford's name traditionally heads the list of artists who have managed to integrate themselves into the Hollywood machine and function successfully as creative film-makers, within its commercial structure. Ford himself has never seen it that way. As early as 1936, he made a public statement of his discomfort: "It's a constant battle to do something fresh. First they want you to repeat your last picture. . . . Then they want you to continue whatever vein you succeeded in with the last picture. You're a comedy director, or a spectacle director, or a melodrama director. You show 'em you've been each of these in turn, and effectively, too. So they grant you range. Another time they want you to knock out something *another* studio's gone and cleaned up with. . . ."

His film reveals with depressing clarity the nature and extent of the restrictions which the industrial system places on personal communication. Its relative, and glorious, failure demonstrates the contradictions inherent in the commercial machine and exaggerated by its current *modus operandi*.

The story of the Cheyenne nation's fifteen hundred mile trek from the government reservation in Oklahoma back to their Yellowstone homeland had long fascinated Ford as a potential movie subject. He made several unsuccessful attempts to set it up as a medium budget production. Eventually the only way to convert the project into reality was to turn it into a blockbuster.

Beyond a certain figure, every extra dollar on the budget represents an additional strain on the executive's nerves. Every scene has to be double-checked for consumer appeal. The temptation to "improve" the work of the men actually making the film seems to become irresistible. In return for their huge investment Warners doubtless anticipated another "great Western in the classic Ford tradition". Ford delivered a film designed to question that tradition and to destroy the legend which, of all people, he himself has been most instrumental in creating. Whereas the budget was supposed to have guaranteed an action-packed epic, Ford centred the film on the moral development of a hero too human to be heroic: few of the most important scenes involve more than two or three characters.

Thus betrayed, Warners set about bringing the film into line with every philistine's image of what a blockbuster ought to be. Where Ford wanted something much more intimate and evocative, Alex North was called in to provide a self-consciously Epic score. The picture was

cut for action, many of the more personal sequences being jettisoned in order to build up the movie's spectacular aspects. Scenes which Ford had intended for drastic pruning (particularly those with Karl Malden which now appear over-emphasised) were retained. Others, more vital to Ford's conception, landed on the cutting-room floor: Sal Mineo's important role has been reduced to skeletal dimensions. One sequence, mentioned in the synopsis and essential to the plot, is quite absent from the film as released.

*Cheyenne Autumn* thus joins the list of the cinema's great ruins; we are more profitably employed examining its greatness than lamenting its mutilation. There's no need, at this stage, to detail its demonstrations of Ford's genius: those of us who had imagined that we could see legitimate objections to his method were silenced, and finally, by *Donovan's Reef*. Each scene, discounting the excesses allowed to Malden, is realised with precision and intimacy, the direct emotional appeal embedded in the details of the action. The pattern and meaning so firmly established in the organisation of the scenes has not been allowed to emerge fully from the organisation of the narrative. But, as in Minelli's *Two Weeks in Another Town* or Ray's *King of Kings*, the power and beauty of the separate sequences contradicts, where it does not excuse, the incoherence of the total structure. On the train out of Shinbone the ageing senator Ransie Stoddard, the legendary *Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*, contemplated the transformation of the Western landscape: "Look at it, Hallie. It was once a wilderness. Now it's a garden". The central question remained open: were we to admire or to regret the transformation? In *Liberty Valance* Ford developed an exciting tension between a story which celebrated the submission of the Old West to the rule of law and order, and a style which evoked nostalgia for the primitive nobility of its untamed frontiers. This ambiguity, essential to the entire Western legend, is resolved in Ford's own terms by *Cheyenne Autumn*.

The central subject here is the attempt to impose an inhuman discipline on a deep, anarchic emotion. For the Cheyenne, the determination to repossess their native land is unreasoned because unquestionable: a necessity which operates beyond the reach of logic and to which the desire for comfort, for life itself, is subordinated. Disaster is provoked by the inability or the refusal, of others to acknowledge the force of their determination. The action of

the film constitutes a series of destructive efforts to cultivate the wilderness of human feeling and make it submit to the orderly patterns of a garden.

Where the needs of the Cheyenne, which are felt rather than thought, can only be understood through sympathy, decisions based on calculation become invalid and destructive. True judgment of the situation is prevented in various ways: by administrative convenience; by economic interest (the dollar patriots and the land-grabbers); by abstract conceptions of duty (Widmark, initially) and order (Malden); and by the exploitable nature of the conflict. The "New York Globe" decides to give editorial support to the Indian cause, but as a means to increase circulation by adopting a different line, not through an understanding of the Cheyenne position. Among the Indians themselves, the first battle is precipitated by a young brave (Sal Mineo) eager to use the conflict to promote his courtship of another man's wife.

In the film's opening sequence the Cheyenne gather at the army outpost to await the arrival of a posse of politicians who are expected to do something to implement the promises made to the Indians. A soldier is despatched in order to signal the approach of "those gentlemen from the East". Ford holds the shot until man and horse become a small speck in a huge landscape. Throughout the movie emphasis is placed on the distance between the men who make the decisions and the people whom these decisions most directly concern.

*Cheyenne Autumn* develops a theme which has frequently found expression in Ford's work: time and again, at least from *Stagecoach* (1938) to *Donovan's Reef*, judgments not based on sympathy and personal involvement prove to be incomplete and destructive. Where most of us are accustomed to regard detachment as a prerequisite of true judgment, Ford finds the two qualities incompatible: judgment is a function of sympathy. This makes him the least Brechtian of directors. It may also explain why he has so often, not just risked, but courted the accusation of sentimentality: he does not want to allow us a detached, unemotional, and so to his mind false view of his characters' experiences.

The conflict between detachment and sympathy is traced in the evolution of Captain Archer (Richard Widmark), and in the tension between an obligation to carry out orders based on abstract calculation and a personal experience which convinces him that the orders are unjust. At the start of the film he is aware that the Indians have been betrayed; he wants "every big-wig in Washington" to see how miserable the reservation is. But his involvement does not go beyond a reasoned belief that something needs to be done to correct an administrative error. By travelling over the same territory and enduring the same hardships in his pursuit of the Cheyenne, he comes to understand, sympathise with and finally share their determination. It is only when the Secretary of the Interior (Edward G. Robinson) has heard Archer's personal account and abandoned the attempt to deal with the problem by remote control from Washington that a solution becomes possible.

"This is the West, sir. When the legend becomes fact, print the legend". Thus the newspaper editor in *Liberty Valance*. *Cheyenne Autumn* again complements the earlier picture by showing the less happy results of printing the legend. Throughout the film the legendary reputation of the Cheyenne as bloodthirsty



savages distorts the facts and prevents the sympathetic consideration which their case deserves. It takes Archer a long time to realise that *these* Indians are no longer the proud warriors of former times, but a collection of hungry wanderers who just want to go home. The Western myth continually asserts itself as a destructive force: a cattle-man shoots down an unarmed brave who has come to beg for food because he "always wanted to kill me an Indian" and because an Indian scalp would enable him to silence the bragging of the old-timers.

As a portrayal of the degeneracy of the Old West, the end of its heroic era, the Dodge City episode (which has been mistaken for a simple

piece of irrelevant fun) summarises the movie's themes, though in a lighter vein. Based like the main story on a true episode in U.S. history, the Battle of Dodge City illustrates the Western legend operating, this time, to grotesque rather than tragic effect. The citizens believe the wild tales about the scale of the Cheyenne "revolt" and prepare to evacuate their inadequately garrisoned town. The evacuation is led by men who, having known the West in the old days, realise the folly of the general panic. Wyatt Earp (James Stewart) and Doc Holliday (Arthur Kennedy) conduct the evacuation in picnic spirit, but it turns into a rout when the citizens observe a single forlorn Indian riding along disconsolately in the distance.

Earp himself may be less gullible, but he is scarcely more heroic than the other Dodge citizens. With no more great battles to fight, no antagonists worth more than passing attention, the ageing marshal, short-sighted and effete, sits around in the saloon and plays a tetchy game of poker, content to accept his ten per cent cut of the town's gambling take. Miss Guinevere Plantagenet attempts to revive memories of a meeting during the old days back in Wichita, but without success. It was all, we gather, too long ago. The heroes are tired; which is why the organisation men have taken over.

V. F. Perkins

## SUNDAY IN NEW YORK

The "will-she, won't she?" problem is one that has pursued Doris Day through an increasing number of gauze filters in a series of Universal-International comedies, and it has now, alas, befallen the delectable Miss Natalie Wood. The sight of Miss Wood, nervously virginal throughout *Sex and the Single Girl*, coupled with the sight of Jane Fonda, distressingly virginal until the fade-out of *Sunday in New York*, has clouded the spectacles of our critics who have promptly fallen to musing over "the rules currently governing American sex comedy". But *Sunday in New York* won't really fit the "it's only O.K. if you have a ring on your finger" cycle. For a start, Miss Fonda spends a while actually trying to *lose* her virginity. This time it's the man who won't oblige. So what else is new? Well, of course no one actually copulates on screen—this isn't a Swedish movie we're talking about. It's an M.G.M. picture based on a stage play by Norman Krasna and it presumably sports a rating from the Hays Office. Maybe it's only "morally objectionable in part for all" as that Office would have it. But in a tiny way, this comedy/farce is reasonably adult and the moral it follows is simple: not "men marry decent girls" (*that* line is said tongue in cheek) but "affairs are something personal". Cliff Robertson decides to marry the girl he transports back and forth across America in the forlorn hope of a shack-up, and when Rod Taylor and Jane Fonda are left alone together at the end, there certainly isn't a parson there to officiate.

Miss Fonda is caught between two sets of rules—the ones she has been taught, and the ones that boys expect of her. She has begun to believe that she is the last of a dying race, a virgin and therefore a freak. An attractive and normal girl, she is turning neurotic over two absurd rules. She veers between two extremes, first laying out a dressing gown in order to give the impression that her mother is staying over and may burst in at any minute, second fiercely setting out to persuade a man to relieve her of her intolerable condition.

The film that director Peter Tewkesbury and Norman Krasna have made veers between farce and comedy in a manner that pleasantly complements the girl's mixture of attitudes. It places non-farcical characters in farcical situations: you can actually *like* the Fonda and Taylor characters, whereas, for instance, it never really occurs to *like* the people in *Goodbye Charlie*. Before the farce really breaks loose, it has been established that after all the dislike and mutual humiliation, Taylor and Fonda could actually care for one another. Up to the moment that the fiancé bounds in, Mr. Krasna has kept the farce in check, lightly employing the rule that if a thing is funny when done once,

it will be twice as funny done again when the audience expects it. So Miss Fonda's ability to hook men is literally shown when she and Mr. Taylor get pinned on their first acquaintance on a bus; not only that, she becomes pinned to another man shortly afterwards and Mr. Taylor has to come to the rescue.

After the fiancé (Robert Culp) has burst in and Miss Fonda has told him that Taylor is her brother, Mr. Krasna shows that to repeat the gag of inopportune opening of doors when the audience is *not* expecting it is to make it *three* times as funny: the real brother appears. By juxtaposing this breathtaking device with the touching scene immediately before, Krasna pushes the film out through the other side of farce into a hysterical but nightmare truth. What do Taylor and Fonda do when discovered together in bath robes? They fall back on convention: they were caught in the rain and got soaked. This excuse is recognised by everyone as preposterous, doubly so because they have all seen it used on stage or screen before.

Relying heavily upon some conventions, destroying others, with its real characters caught up in convention, trying to escape but falling back on convention when they find themselves too far adrift on their own, the construction of *Sunday in New York* reflects the hilarious present-day unease about an essentially light-hearted subject. Surprisingly, the film has fallen into a particularly horrible convention that one thought had almost been left behind. I refer to the relentless plugging of the pianist Peter Nero, whose brief, toad-like and infinitely heralded appearance takes one back to the days when extras stood two-deep

and slightly swaying around Dinah Shore and her piano. A more powerful director than Peter Tewkesbury might have been able to resist such intrusions (always assuming that he and Nero aren't staunch buddies). Otherwise Tewkesbury, who is new to movies from television, acquits himself very well. He has an excellent sense of comedy timing and composition—Cliff Robertson's head coming up into frame when he realises that Jo Morrow has just flown off to Denver without him, Jane Fonda's eyes bulging as Rod Taylor presses down upon her and the camera mounts above them—and this is a good augury for the future. He has, too, an eye for the small pieces of "business" that have sometimes been lacking when TV directors get to making movies: Miss Fonda finds a copy of *Playboy* while Taylor is talking, and idly leafs through until she comes to the pullout Playmate section. At this she grows flustered and hides it under a pile of other magazines in case it should give him ideas. Taylor also makes sure we get the point of Taylor's anger at Fonda's condition by putting a bent cigarette in his mouth, by planting a bent propeller by the fireplace.

Mr. Tewkesbury's next picture is *Emil and the Detectives* for Walt Disney. One hardly expects him to be so evil minded there, but it will be interesting to see whether his talent can flower in such soil.

Mark Shivas

*Still: The second surprise entry in Sunday in New York—Cliff Robertson, Rod Taylor, Jane Fonda and Robert Culp.*





# THE SILENCE

There are those who find *The Silence* ridiculous, and certainly it is either ridiculous or a near-masterpiece. A defence may well begin with this sense of absurdity: the sense that all this is simply too much of a bad thing: Lesbianism, masturbation, copulation in a church (off-screen), sodomy, urination, consumption, funeral snapshots, preparations for war, dwarfs, and an emaciated horse.

Bergman's awareness of the potential risibility of *The Silence* can hardly be doubted. When a man of proven intelligence and sophistication courts the risk of absurdity on such a scale, one cannot suppose that he had blindly made a fool of himself. And the films preceding *The Silence* offer ample evidence of a keen awareness of the absurd: in *Winter Light* it even becomes a leading theme. One could point to the revealing moment in *The Virgin Spring* when the father of the ravished and murdered girl, after a lengthy ordeal of self-purification, strides into the hall where her slayers are sleeping, seats himself majestically in the great chair, strikes his butcher's knife peremptorily into the table, and no one wakes up. Long stretches of *Winter Light*, that shamefully neglected film, hover on the brink of farce. Give the slightest push to the opening communion sequence which is perhaps Bergman's greatest *tour-de-force*, or to the ensuing scene between Björnstrand, von Sydow and Gunnel Lindblom where von Sydow asks for some reason to go on living, and they would be hilarious. Bergman keeps the balance, and they remain poised between the farcical and the tragic. The tragedy derives from the potential absurdity, which is the absurdity of life without belief, of human beings solemnly performing a meaningless rigmarole whose meaninglessness doesn't end in itself but renders all their lives, all their relationships meaningless too.

We can find these situations funny if we can forget that these are human beings (by implication, ourselves) who are involved in them. We can find dwarfs funny if we can forget that they too are human beings. In one respect the dwarfs are central to *The Silence*. They are physically stunted as the main characters are emotionally stunted. We see them in the music hall, their grotesqueness exploited for entertainment. Later, we see them return, pitifully drunk, still in costume, some dressed as women, along the corridor to their hotel-room, and we are made to feel the reality of their situation, the essential misery of their existence: they are not just a show, they are human beings whose absurdity is also their tragedy. Similarly, the other characters can appear merely absurd grotesques until we recognise them as, in certain abstracted and emphasised essentials, our own mirror-reflections.

The dwarfs didn't choose to be dwarfs: their stuntedness was thrust upon them by fate or chance. Similarly, the other characters are quite unable to fashion or control their destinies, to bring about their own happiness or fulfilment. The implication is that *something beyond* is necessary to fulfilment, that we are happy in a deep sense only through submission to that something, and that the something perhaps doesn't exist, or has forgotten or forsaken or been lost by us. It is now a commonplace that the silence of the title is God's silence (or might one say Godot's?—the film associates itself naturally with the plays of Beckett). The complacent, superficial agnostic will laugh at the film; the agnostic who has really faced the consequences of his agnosticism will shudder, seeing a part of himself reflected there, and

reflected mercilessly, in a clear cold light.

We see dwarfs, in their progress down the corridor, partly through Ester's eyes. She is seeing them for the first time, after an emotional experience that has broken her, and in them crystallises her sense of the absurdity of existence: a procession of partly transvestite, drunken dwarfs, emerging from nowhere, down an empty hotel corridor in a strange country in the middle of the night, solemnly greeting her as they pass. This sense of absurdity arises primarily from the characters' being thrown back upon themselves. If there is no God, no afterlife, then they must be their own justification. Their only means of proving their own reality is through physical sensation. So physical sensation becomes the supreme end. Yet it is necessarily transient, and when it becomes an end, not a means, it can only leave the consciousness unsatisfied, frustrated. *The Silence* is about desperation; particularly, the misuse of the body that such desperation precipitates. Hence the attempt at an *inclusive* portrayal of the major sexual deviations and abuses. One aspect of the film's theme—the inadequacy of purely physical gratification to bring peace to the human consciousness—is summed up in the scene where Ester masturbates. We watch her pitiful momentary release, then the terrible hopelessness in her eyes as full consciousness returns. But in the context of the film, "normal" copulation, when reduced to mere personal gratification, cut off from all tenderness and affection, is seen as no less a perversion, a point that was presumably all the clearer before the censor's stupid cut deprived the sequence of the unbridled sensuality of its logical culmination.

Another, related, aspect of the film is the sense of dislocation, of an organism irretrievably torn apart, the parts unable to function creatively in isolation. Ester and Anna are complementary as well as opposed. The suggestion of allegory—Ester as mind and soul, Anna as body—though it cannot be pressed too far, gives the film a new disturbing dimension and reveals illuminating parallels. Ester's intellectual achievement as a translator is as barren as Anna's desperate sensuality, and as much an evasion, a means of temporary and unsatisfying self-deception. With mind and body in direct antagonism, each invalidates the activities of the other.

Two pieces of symbolism require comment. The horse Ester watches from the window—emaciated, near collapse, pulling a load clearly too heavy for it—is a metaphor for Ester's spiritual condition which escapes the clumsiness and crudity of Eisenstein's celebrated man/peacock comparison because it is integrated in the action and because its function is dramatic as well as symbolic: Ester recognises herself in it, and the realisation is a stage in her self-discovery. The other symbol—the tank—is even more interesting, because there seems no "explanation" for it at all, no reason why it should come into the square outside the hotel in the middle of the night, no reason why it should stop there, no reason why it should go away, neither a dramatic nor a symbolic reason. That is why it is so unnerving. As an image, it evokes the menacing and inhuman: we see no men inside it, no human beings connected with it. It becomes a purely destructive mechanism. But the lack of any rational explanation of its movements conveys to us, as to Ester, that sense of uncertainty, precariousness and unpredictability, of potential absurdity that the film is built on.

Perhaps the most important aspect of the whole film is its positive trend centred in the child. This positive tendency is to some extent

arbitrary. Nevertheless, one feels it validated by the film's rigorous honesty. I am thinking not only of the child himself, of the sense of healthy new life conveyed through his curiosity, his readiness to search, reflect and learn, but of the symbolic (if equivocal) resurrection of which he is the agent. Ester reaches the last depths of desolation and desperation, reaches, apparently, death itself, as she strains on her sick-bed to a terrifying unexplained booming noise. At the climax of what seem to be her death-agonies, she draws the sheet up over her head: the traditional way of signifying death. Afterwards, the little boy uncovers her. She is alive, she has (perhaps—it is left very doubtful) come through. The new life, *her* new life, is symbolised in her continuing relationship with the child, expressed through her letter explaining "words in a foreign language". We see him engrossed in it as the film ends. Life will go on, there will still be someone who will try to understand, to make sense of the seeming absurdity. Yet the resurrection, as presented, remains that of Ester herself. One factor that helps make it possible is that she has to some extent come to terms with her relationship with her father, with whom she has previously shown herself closely identified. In her agony, she sees him, with a tenderness made possible by sudden detachment, as he was: an absurd fat man. The resemblance to the end of *Wild Strawberries* will be clear. Here, too the sense of reconciliation with the previous generation gained through a new detachment is linked with the development of a mutual understanding with the younger generation. A sense of continuity, admittedly very tenuous, but the tenuousness is the point, has been established. But the resurrection is possible chiefly because Ester has reached the lowest point, where the only possible movement, other than crossing into death, is upward again. The passage recalls the equally arbitrary turning-point in *The Ancient Mariner*, where the mariner is able to experience positive emotions again for no other reason than that he has reached bottom; there is no further downward movement possible.

This positive trend, however, is very tentative. The boy's position is extremely fragile and uncertain, and if Ester is resurrected it is not at all clear what *to*, since she is left alone in the foreign city with no problems any nearer solution. If it is justified at all, then it is through the mercilessly uncompromising honesty of the undertaking, itself a strong positive quality, rather than through any concrete grounds for hope. One doesn't feel this positive tendency as insincere or self-deluding, only as very frail and tentative. One takes away from the film much more overpoweringly its negative sense: the sense of life cut off from God, from meaning, from roots. This is a sufficiently widespread modern phenomenon, but it is perhaps found in an acute form in Sweden, where the swift development of the country has resulted in a discontinuing of the old folk-culture without the evolution of any acceptable substitute—a leading motif in *Winter Light*. Hence both the universal implications of *The Silence* and the seriously limiting extremeness with which its themes are expressed. Most of us today feel to some extent displaced persons. We can accept Bergman's protagonists as representing aspects of ourselves, but not our whole selves. That is why the film, if it is a masterpiece, is a masterpiece of a severely restricted order. In the context of Bergman's development it is a remarkable achievement.

Robin Wood



# Small Talk

## HOLLYWOOD

Living in Hollywood (finally) is to be thoroughly engulfed by the directors and their work. Among the sights:

Robert Aldrich waited nervously outside a theatre for the first sneak preview (and press showing) of *Hush . . . Hush, Sweet Charlotte* to begin. He meandered about, looking in shop windows and trying to be inconspicuous; difficult for him since he's a large man. "I think it's a very good picture", he said miserably. "Much better than *Baby Jane*. I don't know if it'll make as much money, but it's a better film." His anxieties were normal, if unwarranted: *Hush . . . Hush* is visually his most exciting work since *Kiss Me Deadly*, and should prove at least as successful financially as *Whatever Happened to Baby Jane?* More gruesome, more terrifying and less contrived, it displays Aldrich's violent personality more elaborately and with greater skill. There is, for openers, an axe murder that compares in intensity, if not in length, with the shower killing in *Psycho*; also a haunting, lyrically chilling dream dance at a remembered ball, done in glimmering whites and black, that rates high among Aldrich's finest sequences. If the ending lacks the emotional depth, that sense of senseless tragedy that *Baby Jane* achieved, the film is still a striking *tour-de-force*, memorably capturing all atmosphere of decay and demented elegance. Bette Davis is excellent again, but she is matched by Agnes Moorehead's best performance since *The Magnificent Ambersons*. Olivia De Havilland is surprisingly convincing as a complete bitch, and Joseph Cotten makes an exquisitely detestable lush. Next for Aldrich is a return to sanity, at least on the surface: *The Flight of the Phoenix*, based on the Elleston Trevor novel about a cargo plane with sixteen men aboard, downed in the midst of the Sahara. With a screenplay by Lukas Heller (who worked on both *Baby Jane* and *Hush . . . Hush*) and starring James Stewart, the film rolls in April on location in the Yuma desert.

Alfred Hitchcock was all set to do a version of John Buchan's *The Three Hostages* (about a triple, international kidnapping) but has abandoned that, it seems for good. Script problems were the evident cause. Also left by the wayside is

an adaptation of James Barrie's *Mary Rose*, scripted by Jay Allen, who did *Marnie* with him. He has, in the meantime, signed an exclusive three-picture deal with Universal, but has yet to announce his first project.

Samuel Fuller is working on a novel of *The Big Red One*, his ambitious, long-planned project concerning the adventures of his own division in the European theatre of the Second World War, as seen through the experiences of one Infantry sergeant, played (if it goes as Fuller would like) by John Wayne. Evidently the idea is that the novel's success would make it easier to finance such a large-scale picture. A look at his work room (complete with a huge old roll-top desk from the typical newspaper office of the past) reveals literally fifty or sixty "yarns" (as he calls them) in various forms of readiness. At the moment he is completing another novel, *Crown of India*, an international intrigue story set in contemporary India, also meant to be filmed following publication. And, as a screenplay, a project tentatively titled *The Red Helmet*, about Vietnam today. His most recent movie, *The Naked Kiss*, had a limited success in America, but though not as expertly realised as *Shock Corridor*, it is still an entirely original work with that feverish brooding intensity which is so unmistakably Fuller's.

Frank Tashlin's newest, *The Disorderly Orderly*, is probably the funniest Jerry Lewis picture he has made; it may well be the funniest picture he has made—period. What it lacks in satiric thrust, it thoroughly compensates for with uproarious gags and an exhaustingly comic pace. It has the quality of some of Keaton's movies, a similarly unrelenting invention and speed; and there is a final chase involving two ambulances (one without a driver) and two rolling stretchers (both occupied) that is as wildly imaginative and far more expertly timed than anything Sennett ever did. Lewis has several marvellous scenes, particularly one in which he picks splattered oatmeal off nurse Kathleen Freeman, also an achingly funny close-up following the discovery that he has just brushed the gums of a patient whose false teeth were out; mainly however he is a creature for Tashlin to animate. The director

has just completed his first movie in England, *The ABC Murders*, with Tony Randall (their first reunion since the memorable *Will Success Spoil Rock Hunter?*), Robert Morley, Anita Ekberg. An advanced look at several sequences clearly reveals it as cinematically his best film ever, and if less personal, certainly the most satisfying work he has done since *Will Success*.

Jerry Lewis himself, as director-producer-writer-actor, has just started shooting his newest comedy, *The Family Jewels* ("It's a working title", he says. "I'm thinking of calling it *Cimarron* or maybe *They Drive by Night*"). The story concerns a little orphan girl who must decide which of her six uncles she wants to live with, or become a ward of the state. All the uncles, plus a stray chauffeur, will of course be played by Jerry.

Blake Edwards has finished shooting and is now editing *The Great Race* (Warners), a multi-million dollar farce based on an actual turn-of-the-century auto race from New York to Paris via Alaska. The villain (all in black) is Jack Lemmon, the hero (all in white) is Tony Curtis, and the lady in question is Natalie Wood. Along for the ride are Peter Falk, Keenan Wynn, Dorothy Provine. Upon completion of this, Edwards will direct another comedy, *What Did You Do in the War, Daddy?* in the *Operation Petticoat* vein, but set in the European theatre. Also on his agenda: Rod Serling's adaptation of Pierre Boulle's *The Planet of the Apes*, and a factual account of *The Battle of Gettysburg*, from the first shot fired to the last.

George Cukor's predictable success with *My Fair Lady* has made him an overnight "discovery": *Sight and Sound* interviewed him, as did the *New York Times*. and *Film Culture* put him on their cover. Also predictably, it is not his best movie, but is a very good one, and happily serves to give him a freedom he has not enjoyed before. He will produce his own work for the first time in a career that spans thirty-five years in pictures, and a long list of beautiful, impeccably made masterpieces of subtlety, taste and invention. His first? No decision yet. Could be *Peter Pan* with Audrey Hepburn. Or a story with Spencer Tracy. Or an adaptation of the novel *The Idol*, for Joseph Levine.

Sam Peckinpah was fired off *The Cincinnati Kid* and replaced by Norman Jewison, which indicates that producer Martin Ransohoff prefers another *Send Me No Flowers* to another *Ride the High Country*. Ransohoff is the bright fellow who has allowed Tony Richardson to go a million over the budget on *The Loved One* (which Tashlin should have done); but then, of course, Mr. Richard-

son is fresh from *Tom Jones*, that *Ben-Hur* of British artistry, while Mr. Peckinpah's Scott-McCrea film was only one of the freshest westerns of the sixties. Anyway, Peckinpah's *Major Dundee* is soon to be seen, and he has already started work on a script at M.G.M. for a chase picture possibly to be made on location either in Mexico or in Hong Kong.

Howard Hawks, after a typically frenetic and hilariously perverse (though not very popular) foray into comedy, *Man's Favorite Sport?* has returned to the action genre with a racing story, his first since *The Crowd Roars* (1932). Titled *Red Line 7000*, it deals with three stock car drivers and their girls, all played by relatively unknown actors: Laura Devon, John Robert Crawford, James Caan, James Ward, Charlene Holt (Tex in *Sport*), Marianna Hill, Norman Alden (the phoney Indian in *Sport*), and a new Hawks discovery in the Bacall tradition named Gail Hire. A 23-year old brunette, she has been a fashion model for the last three years and has never before acted professionally. The director has been experimenting extensively with capturing the real sensation of speed on the screen, and, in some test footage, his placement of the camera within an actual race has achieved a thrilling, extraordinary quality of involvement. Planned to follow this is a western tentatively titled *The Stars in Their Courses*, about an ageing gunfighter (probably John Wayne) who suffers from a weak heart, thereby intensifying the danger of any risk he takes.

Josef von Sternberg, sadly, hasn't made a picture since *The Saga of Anatahan* (1956), but this year will see the publication (by Macmillan) of his long-awaited autobiography, originally called *Guide to a Labyrinth*, but recently retitled (by the author) *Fun in a Chinese Laundry*, after an old Mack Sennett short he once saw and liked. A quick look at the index (in proof) shows a fantastic diversity of material and interest, and the captions for the stills have the same mordant, dryly incisive wit that lies behind all his films. He says the book is not meant simply as a story of his life but also (and more importantly as far as he is concerned) as a look at the cinema and the business of creation that has not been dealt with before. Clearly it will be one of the most important books in many a year. Would that he could now make another picture or two.

John Ford's *Cheyenne Autumn* suffered rather badly from Warner's messing about. A good deal of the personal story between Widmark and Carroll Baker and between Mineo and Montalban's wife was cut to make room for more of the epic footage that Ford had trimmed. The overlong (and badly acted) Karl Malden sequence





was returned to its original length for the peculiar reason of "clarity". These are the main injustices, as well as an intermission (in America at least) that cuts right into the midst of the hilarious Dodge City sequence and destroys the point Ford intended: a satiric comment on the "famous" Battle of Dodge City. From New York one hears that the entire second half of this sequence has now been eliminated, thus making it totally meaningless. The score by Alex North also seems more producer Bernard Smith's contribution than Ford's. Though it remains, despite everything, a memorable and masterful work, there is something painfully wrong with a system that permits a director of Ford's experience (129 films) and international ac-

claim to be so shoddily treated by his underlings. Undeterred, Mr. Ford has already begun his 130th, *Chinese Finale*, set in an American mission in Northern China, circa 1935, during the terrible Mongol raids. In the predominantly female cast (a complete departure) of the M.G.M. release: Patricia Neal, Sue Lyon, Margaret Leighton, Flora Robson, Mildred Dunnock, Betty Field, Eddie Albert, Woody Strode, Mike Mazurki.

Who was it said Hollywood is dead? Admittedly, there don't seem to be any young American directors (as there were in France) with the vitality and talent to continue the great tradition of the remaining masters, but surely dead is still a very premature word.

Peter Bogdanovich

## MADRID

The indisputable high-points of the winter season have been *Man's Favorite Sport?*, *Marnie*, and *The Cardinal*. The first didn't receive very much attention from the critics but pleased everyone, which was all quite normal. Unfortunately, *Marnie*, the strangest and one of the most beautiful of Hitchcock's films, met with incomprehension as much on the part of the critics as the public. Only the magazine *Film Ideal* took up its defence, devoting two numbers to Hitch, dedicated, surprise, surprise, to the philosopher Miguel de Unamuno (a private joke, I hope). Although the advocates of *Marnie* are rather clumsy, they have succeeded nevertheless in doing something useful for the film. After its premiere, *Marnie* was well and truly cut by fifteen minutes. When the massacre was discovered, a group of fifteen to twenty people, editors, friends, sympathisers, etc., along with a member of the Censor Board, went one fine evening to the cinema where the film was showing. When the first cut came—the horse racing sequence—everyone began to protest vigorously, politely explaining to neighbouring spectators what was happening, that they'd been robbed, etc. Of course this caused quite a bit of noise, the cinema attendant came up, and, after a short conference, he and the member of the Censor Board went out to talk to the cinema manager. The projection of the film went on and when the second cut was reached, the missing piece was there! Since then, the film has always been shown completely

uncut. While this affair was amusing, I thought it important to relate because the cutting of films has become quite a habit in Madrid. For example, I saw in a second-run cinema well equipped with 70mm. a version of *Exodus* cut by a good half-hour, including important sequences as Sal Minco's confession before the Irgun! Also, after its first run, *Man's Favorite Sport?* was shown without the sequence in the revolving bar and without the trains which accompany the kisses between Hudson and Prentiss. At present, even on their first run, films suffer much damage, so the success of *Operation Marnie* will perhaps put an end to such iniquities.

*The Cardinal*, which came out at Christmas, is the best of the festive season's films. Because of the boycotting of Columbia provoked by *Behold a Pale Horse* (and which will surely finish with the closing of all Columbia offices in Spain) we had to wait a year for it, but better late than never. . . It is the most admirably constructed of the recent Premingers. In particular, there is a marvellous unanimity of idea and image which unites the utmost stripping-down with extremely simple and elegant refinement, as in the extraordinary sequence of the waltz. After James Bond and the Beatles, we have recently had another look at English films. *This Sporting Life* was shunned by the public, although it obtained a considerable *succès d'estime*. It must be pointed out that the copy shown here had the flash-backs treated in sepia, a useful process for distinguishing the past from the present—rather a difficult task, it is true—but which makes the film very annoying to watch; it is like a sort of brown fog, tiring for the eyes. Even so, *This Sporting Life* is to be preferred to the all too insignifi-

*Stills: Directors and their stars. Top: Goodbye Charlie. Centre: Hush . . . Hush, Sweet Charlotte. Bottom: The Disorderly Orderly. Opposite: Agnes Moorhead and William Campbell in Hush . . . Hush.*



cant *Tom Jones* and too obscure *Lawrence of Arabia*, both of which were welcomed here with great acclaim.

As far as the Spanish cinema is concerned, "waiting" is the key word. The two most interesting films so far of the Spanish "nouvelle vague" have recently come out. Jorge Grau's *El Espontaneo*, the story of a boy who is seeking his place in the sun and who dies one day in the bull-ring, failed miserably because of an obvious piece of sabotage on the part of the distributor. On the other hand, Miguel Picazo's *La Tia Tula*, adapted from a novel by Unamuno, has had a brilliant success. In the cinema in which it was first shown, it brought in the biggest receipts of the year after *The Pink Panther*, a most encouraging fact for the young film makers, most of whose films have been avoided by the public. But the fate of our cinema is definitely in the balance with the coming into force on the 1st of January 1965 of the new law which will guarantee the protection of Spanish films through the control of receipts. What will be the result? No one knows . . . all one does know is that censorship recently became stricter. Many scenarios have been rejected, and many foreign films banned, such as *Gypsy* (LeRoy), *Sedotta e Abbandonata* (Germi), *Ieri, Oggi e Domani* (De Sica), *L'Ape Regina*

(Ferreri), *Eva* and *The Servant* (Losey), *Sex and the Single Girl* (Quine).

A few interesting films have finished shooting—Manuel Summers' *Por el Camino Andamos* (which has changed its title twice), a comedy about a *ménage à trois*, already banned twice; Francisco Regueiro's *Amador*, also previously banned, the story of a handsome but shy murderer (Maurice Ronet) who kills his latest love (Amparo Soler Leal); Jorge Grau's *Acteon*, a curious experiment in describing the feelings of a priest who leaves his village and is swallowed up in the big city, treated in the *Marienbad* style, with Martin Lassalle (of Bresson's *Pickpocket*) as the protagonist. Last and best of all, *Chimes at Midnight*, made by Orson Welles in the castles of Cardona, Colmenar Viejo and Carabanchel. It is a free adaptation of Shakespeare's *Henry IV*, and its subject is the young prince Hal's (Keith Baxter) struggle of conscience, torn between the frivolity of the people and of his friend Falstaff (Orson Welles) and the austerity of the court. Finally he fulfils his destiny by becoming Henry V. It is acted by John Gielgud (Henry IV), Jeanne Moreau (Doll Tearsheet), Norman Rodway (Hotspur), Marina Vlady (Lady Percy), Margaret Rutherford (Mistress Quickly).

José Luis Guarner

## NEW YORK

The trouble with Billy Wilder in *Kiss Me Stupid* is that while he doesn't really believe in morality, he doesn't really enjoy immorality, and so we have another exercise in joylessly *jeune* cynicism à la *Irma La Douce*. Wilder's forte has never been visual style, and the studio decor in and around Climax, Nevada, sets a new low in drabness and dreariness. Unfortunately, the usual Wilder compensations in writing and acting are lacking on this occasion. Wilder and I.A.L. Diamond milk Climax for all it's worth, and throw in some clever topical gags about the Sinatra *films* kidnapping.

New York is in the doldrums right now, and except for the new Godard and the new Antonioni, nothing from abroad seems particularly appetizing. *Contempt* opened in New York to reviews that Leonid Moguy, Max Pecas and Albert Zugsmith would find insulting. The lady reviewers, in particular, seemed to be upset no end by Brigitte Bardot's bare backside. No one bothered trying to explain what the picture was all about. It is now the "in" thing to be anti-intellectual again, to argue,

God help us, that movies should be fun and games. If *L'Avventura* opened in today's climate, it would be booed, I am sure. Audiences hiss *Umbrellas of Cherbourg* and applaud *Zorba the Greek*, whatever that means. *Goldfinger* opened to moderately unfavorable reviews and spectacular business. The big thing on the marquee is the name: "PUSSY GALORE". Every time the name is recited, the audience guffaws wildly. *The Servant* and *Tom Jones* have apparently blazed the way, and the censors are apparently too scared to object. If the late JFK could read about Pussy Galore in cold print, how can the censors object?

Underground film-maker Ron Rice died of pneumonia in Mexico City. He seemed to be one of the few new film-makers with any feeling for the medium, and it is too bad that we seem further away than ever from a viable personal cinema. I have been lecturing here and there in America, and I find that Godard is becoming the darling of the intellectuals, and that there is more enthusiasm for the *politique* on the campuses than in most editorial offices. *Vivre sa*



*Vie* was written off by the regular reviewers, but it has become an underground classic.

The New York Film Critics gathered to vote on their annual awards, and a sweep for *My Fair Lady* was widely predicted. Stanley Kubrick's *Dr. Strangelove* came on strong, however, almost winning the best picture award, being ahead on a late ballot before a mysterious switch, and then winning the best director award for Kubrick over Cukor and Losey. Harold Pinter's script for *The Servant* nosed out the Terry Southern-Peter George-Stanley Kubrick script for *Strangelove* with Jean Anouilh bringing up the rear with *Becket*. The only landslide victor was Kim Stanley for *Seance on a Wet Afternoon*, triumphing over light competition from Sophia Loren, Audrey Hepburn and Julia Andrews for *Mary Poppins*. When informed of her victory, Miss Stanley cracked: "It should have gone to Sophia Loren". Best actor was a tight squeeze between Rex Harrison and Dirk Bogarde, Dirk Bogarde leading 7 to 6 on a late ballot before somebody wilted under the pressure, and switched on the last ballot to make it 7 to 6 for Rex Harrison. The divisions among the generally Philistinish New York Film Critics carried over into the balloting for best foreign picture with *That Man from Rio*, eventual-

ly edging out *Seduced and Abandoned* and *The Organizer*, the French entry winding up with a minority of the votes. A motion by Bosley Crowther to honor John Ford for his overall career was voted down. The fact that Ford had won four Film Critics Awards in the past hardly mattered to this press-agent dominated assembly.

As far as production is concerned, the New York scene is zero. There was some publicity recently concerning a Becket film starring Buster Keaton. Some footage was taken, but there is no trace of a finished film. Similarly, someone called Mary Ellen Bute claims to be shooting "Finnegan's Wake", but I'll be damned if I can get any details. Everything in New York seems to be somewhat unreal at this moment. For example, I almost literally bumped into Jayne Mansfield backstage at a television quiz show, and I asked her what she was doing these days, and she told me that she had just appeared in Tony Richardson's *The Loved One*. Everyone seems to have been in *The Loved One*, which now looms as a four-million-dollar art film in black-and-white. Now you lucky limeys can look forward to Tony Richardson's version of *The Charge of the Light Brigade*. Whee!

Andrew Sarris



# PARIS

Fortunately, there is Jean-Luc Godard.

If there weren't, the balance sheet of the French cinema in 1964 would show aesthetic bankruptcy.

Ninety-one films were made this year (against 120 in 1960), only forty of them entirely French. And look who made them: Verneuil, Delannoy, Robert Dhery, Christian-Jaque, Borderie and Hunebelle. At best we had films from Philippe de Broca, Georges Lautner, Michel Deville.

But as for the great directors, whose films are awaited with impatience,—Renoir, Bresson, Astruc, Rohmer, Chabrol, Resnais, D  my, etc.—well, the situation isn't very promising.

Renoir is staying in the United States, teaching in a Californian university. Bresson is trying to set up *Lancelot*, a project he has been keen on for the last ten years.

Astruc has made a thirty minute film, *The Last Night of Evariste Gallois* a nineteenth century French mathematician of genius who was killed in a duel at the age of twenty-two. It is perhaps the best thing Astruc has done so far, and makes one even more bitter to think of the difficulties he has in trying to make the feature films we are waiting for.

We will come back to Rohmer. After a two-year long purgatory, Chabrol is in action again. After a very commercially-minded thriller (*The Tiger likes Fresh Meat*) he is preparing a *Marie-Chantal* which he will begin in the immediate future. Resnais? Nothing for the moment. D  my is immersed in preparations for a filmed opera.

What does all this signify? That after the great fight provoked by the Nouvelle Vague, French production-distribution, hovering on the verge of bankruptcy because of its own incompetence, is trying desperately to catch on to the *cin  ma de papa*, the lowest, most stupid and academic form of cinema of all, and is doing everything possible to avoid going back to the "little dilettantes" (of the Nouvelle Vague) who have been

made scapegoats, whereas in fact they contributed some of the finest successes of French production.

For more security, the good film financiers have arranged things to stifle independent production and distribution which they have every reason to fear. From now on, as the result of a new law, one must have a capital of 300,000 francs in order to be a producer, 500,000 to be a regional distributor and 2,000,000 to be a national distributor. These healthy measures will soon put the French cinema on the intellectual level of the English cinema before its reawakening or of the present German cinema whose perfect functioning fascinates our industrial and commercial people (not to mention the government).

What can be done to offset this organised debasement? Without wishing to bring up here the articles published in Nos. 161-162 of *Cahiers du Cin  ma*, let us say that there are only two solutions. Either pretend to become part of the system while preserving one's own personality, as Chabrol has done, or remain completely on the outside.

This second alternative is illustrated by a fascinating recent experiment: making 16 mm. films professionally. This gives complete freedom of expression. Rohmer has made in this way a full-length film composed of two stories under the title of *Deux Contes Moraux* and, furthermore, an audacious young producer, convinced of the necessity of freedom, has just made an episode film, *Les Quartiers de Paris*, in 16mm. and colour. The different episodes are directed by Jean-Luc Godard, Claude Chabrol, Eric Rohmer, Jean Rouch, Jean-Daniel Pollet and Jean Douchet.

The fact that Godard and Chabrol are taking part in such an experiment proves how vitally necessary it is to the contemporary French cinema. But perhaps the best solution is Godard's: produce films at minimal cost, and never let up.

Jean Douchet

# ROME

1965 will be Rossellini year. During its first few months we shall see on television the five hour-long parts of his latest film, *L'Et   del Ferro*. It has a form not only new (as is usually the case) for him, but also for the cinema in general. It is not just a didactic documentary on the evolution of iron through the centuries, but a film consisting of: (1) sections in which Rossellini in person explains, with the help of objects and

drawings, certain aspects of the evolution of the mineral; (2) news-reel montages (only, of course, for the 19th and 20th centuries); (3) sequences from existing films (e.g. for the Roman and Napoleonic eras); (4) numerous fictional sequences illustrating the different countries and historical periods in which iron played an important part. It is a film basically about *Man*, his clothes, customs and behaviour, although linked ex-

ternally to the evolution of iron. *L'Et   del Ferro* is the work of a great humanist and a great moralist. Having freely chosen a form which eliminates all suggestion of continuous narrative and allows him to linger on anything which might interest him, he has imposed a strong discipline on himself. With the simplicity of a Griffith movie, it is like *Francesco giullare di Dio*, which looks as if it had been made in 1912: camera movements, zooms and montage effects seem as if they're being used for the first time. Rossellini approached history without the problems of antiquarian or cultural references, but with the greatest simplicity, catching the essence of each gesture, of each event, without stripping it of its context. The form permits the inclusion of episodes which are superfluous to a narrative (in the conventional sense) but essential for the definition of Man who is its ultimate object. Didactic and dramatic, it is simultaneously a comedy and a western, a film by Flaherty, Godard, Lum  re and M  li  s in 1964.

Three films at present interest (or should interest) critics and

public: *Prima della Rivoluzione* by Bernardo Bertolucci, *Il Vangelo Secondo Matteo* and *Deserto Rosso*.

In *Deserto Rosso* I think that Antonioni has broken with the definitiveness of his last films, particularly *L'Eclisse*. If *L'Eclisse* was a film of affirmation, *Deserto Rosso* is much more modern, a film of questioning and uncertainty. Perhaps the use of colour has obliged Antonioni to be more concerned with concrete reality (there is no direct symbolism). Perhaps the subject of the film has furnished him with the elements for a real "mise en sc  ne". The central character, Giuliana (Monica Vitti) looks around herself and fails to understand. But if, even tormented by neuroses, she does not understand or understands only in infantile terms (as at the end), the spectator sees in her the pathetic witness of a humanism which has perhaps vanished for ever. Giuliana's way of looking at things is an alarm bell in the alienated and alienating world which surrounds her. It also is the capacity to consider herself and to face up to a world of objects. The film is experimental in the almost





radical abandonment of the contemplative cinematic language of *L'Eclisse* in favour of more fragmented expression (in the montage and the succession of sequences) which is the exact equivalent of the uncertainty of Giuliana: in the stylistic approach, too, the spirit of research which animates her is reflected.

Other films which have been little advertised or discussed include three first films: *Il Terrorista*, an excellent work by the theatrical director Gianfranco De Bosio, *Il Demonio* by Brunello Rondi (ex-critic and collaborator of Rossellini and Fellini), and *Pelle viva*, a first film by Giuseppe Fina, which is a precise and well coordinated description of the working world of the north, acted by a scintillating Elsa Martinelli. In the field of comedy, there is *Il Giovedì* by Dino Risi, a director of uneven but noteworthy ability (*Il Sorpasso* remains for me the best Italian comedy film).

In 1965 almost all the major Italian directors will be bringing

out a film. Luchino Visconti has finished *Vaghe Stelle dell'Orsa* with Claudia Cardinale, Jean Sorel, Michael Craig, Marie Bell and Renzo Ricci, a melodrama film with a contemporary setting in a Tuscan province. Francesco Rosi is making his Spanish film in colour on the life of a matador. Frederico Fellini has at last finished work on *Giulietta degli Spiriti* with Giulietta Masina, a film as usual sunk in mystery. Vittorio Cottafavi will very soon be presenting *I Cento Cavalieri*. Michelangelo Antonioni is at present making in colour one of the three episodes of *I tre Volti*, produced by Dino De Laurentiis to star Soraya. Finally, Vittorio De Seta has long been making a film very different from *Banditi a Orgosolo*: the story of a left-wing intellectual's personal crisis, a search into the past for motives which explain a present situation compounded of schematic certainty and profound alienation. It will be called *Un Uomo a Metà* and will be acted by Gian Maria Volonté.

Adriano Aprà

## STOCKHOLM

The establishment of the Swedish Film Institute a year and a half ago was a welcome contribution to a film industry in crisis. The Institute's fund—10% of all box-office receipts from all films shown in Sweden, or some £800,000 a year—supplies money to a film school, a film library, public relations activities etc. But most important, financial support is given to Swedish films in con-

sideration of their artistic value, and in proportion to their box-office receipts.

The filmic climate should thus have improved. Economic support should be a guarantee for producers willing to risk more controversial subjects without commercial considerations, and should give directors a chance to work in complete freedom. It should also coax producers into increasing

their output.

In the first years of the '60's, Swedish film production dwindled to about fifteen films a year. In 1964, eighteen films had their première. Development is slow or, to be more honest, many projects planned and produced in 1964 have not yet been shown. But looking back at the eighteen films is quite depressing. The only two films showing originality in subject and a cinematic structure were Jörn Donner's *To Love* and Ingmar Bergman's severe farce *About All These Women*, considered a failure by most critics and neglected by the public.

The main things lacking in Swedish films are originality and personality. 1964 could be described as the year when Swedish producers could afford to buy more books. Most productions were adapted from novels, generally in an impersonal and unimaginative way. The recent literary trend in Swedish films (a line of authors has been invited to write for the screen, some of them to direct their stories) seems in a way an open "come-hither" to the Institute's jury, which is supposed to give aid to "works with ambition" as well as to "products of outstanding quality". In the mind of the producer "author's name means ambition means reward".

Among the year's more sympathetic translations is Lars-Magnus Lindgren's adaptation of a popular novel, *Käre John* (Dear John), starring Sweden's two most popular actors, Jarl Kulle and Christina Schollin. It's another midsummer tale but discusses love and sex more realistically than other Swedish romantic sagas. Vilgot Sjöman's third film was rigidly constructed

round the women-problematic. Ulla Isaksson's novel *Klänning* (*The Dress*). Gunner Höglund—fine documentarist—aimed Resnais and Hitchcock in his first feature film *Kungsleden* (*Roy Path*) and fell on his face between the two.

The most ambitious and most praised work is Mai Zetterling's *Älskande par* (*Loving Couples*). Her debut is based on seven novels by the Swedish authoress Agnes von Krusenstjerna which caused great excitement during the thirties for their shocking outspokenness about sex and love. They also show a medley of sexual divergences and perversions, played against the background of old and not family ritual. The main action of the film is set in and around a castle during 1914 in the last summer of thoughtlessness and unconcern.

The rich material and its many subjects have been made into rather chaotic whole. It is difficult to find a personal interpretation. Most of the female characters in the film repeatedly agree that "men always deceive you". Perhaps that is Miss Zetterling's viewpoint too. The film is told in flashback. Tricks like a girl running in the present remembering herself running somewhere a few years ago sometimes make it difficult to follow, both as to person and intention. But I would be wrong not to compliment the praiseworthy reconstruction of an epoch and its inhabitants. Some of the finest actors and actresses—Harr Andersson, Eva Dahlbeck, Gunnar Lindblom, Geo Petré, An-Björk, Gunnar Björnstrand—beautifully captured through Svante Nykvist's camera and are carefully handled by the director. *Loving Couples* is powerful in pieces and often shows sensitivity and imagination—rare qualities in Swedish films.

Bo Widerberg did not bring out a picture in 1964. His *Love 64* changed to *Love 65* and will appear in February. Widerberg describes his third film as "serious comedy about love". It has three central characters: a film director preparing a film that looks very much like *Love 65*, his wife and his mistress. They are played by Keve Hjelm, Ann-Mari Gyllenspetz and Evabritt Strandberg respectively. The setting is a small seashore resort near Widerberg's home town, Malmö. The film has been shot totally in that location.

This intimate study of marital and extramarital relationships interspersed by comic interludes with Inger Taube and Ben Carruthers—"my soubrette couple"—says Widerberg. Inger Taube, a girl from Widerberg's first picture

*Stills: Bo Widerberg's Love 65. Opposite Ben Carruthers and Inger Taube. Below: Keve Hjelm and Evabritt Strandberg*





plays a friend of the family. Carruthers impersonates an American actor who the director in the film has met in Cannes and engaged as a whim for a picture that will never be made. Widerberg was at first inspired by Mozart's "Marriage of Figaro" and he constructed his film according to the opera's events and people. But the director dropped the idea because it gave him too little freedom. He therefore also abandoned the idea of having the aria "Voi che sapete" as the central musical theme. But Widerberg hopes that in atmosphere and feeling the film will bear comparison with Mozart's work. He also believes that the film would have owed something to *La règle du jeu*, had he seen Renoir's masterpiece before he started.

According to Widerberg, *Love 65* can also be considered a meta-film, as the director is working this time with material that often breaks the illusion. Naturally the film also stars Nina Widerberg, the director's daughter who played in both *The Pram* and *Raven's End*. Here she plays Keve Hjelm's four year old child.

Widerberg is exploring new milieus with his films and so are other new directors. Yngve Gamlin's *Jakten (The Hunt)* is being shot in the northern and mountainous parts of the country, as was *Royal Path*. Here Jan Trelow has completed *Uppehall i myrlandet (Visit to the Marsh)*, with Max von Sydow in the lead. His film is a part of an inter-Scandinavian project 4x4, with four young directors from Norway, Denmark, Sweden and Finland each making a short story film with the four seasons as a background. The film is being produced by Bengt Forslund, former editor of

"Chaplin" in his first venture into feature films.

1965 promises new ideas, new people and more movies. Two new men have recently started on films. Lars Görling—the author of the notorious 491—is directing *Together with Gunilla, Monday Evening and Tuesday*, about a car accident and its consequences upon a young couple. Stig Ossian Ericson is shooting *Festivitets-salongen (The Festivity Saloon)*, a thrace, a mixture of thriller and farce. Another already completed first film is *June Night* by Bibi Andersson. It has been made by Lars Erik Liedholm, theatre director and Bergman's assistant on *The Silence* and *About All These Women*.

Mai Zetterling, Jörn Donner, Vilgot Sjöman and Bo Widerberg are all planning new films for '65. Alf Sjöberg and Arne Sucksdorff have completed their "come-backs". Sjöberg's *On (The Island)* is yet another study in traditional and aristocratic patterns being changed or destroyed by new and modern ideas. The action of his film takes place on an island in the archipelago from which the authorities have decided to evacuate the population in order to turn it into a military training ground. Sucksdorff's *My Home in Copacabana* is a semi-documentary about the "wild" children of Rio de Janeiro's slum districts.

And Bergman is preparing his 28th film, alternatively called *The Demons* and *The Cannibals*. This one will have Bibi Andersson, Max von Sydow and a Norwegian actress, Liv Ullman, in the leads. It will be set on an island off the Swedish coast and will be Bergman's first attempt at CinemaScope.

## Stig Björkman

markable film it had seemed, even in the dubbed English version shown at Cannes. In view of the current Feuillade revival—which seems to recognise the camp fun to be derived from digging old serials rather than the considerable aesthetic virtues of the films—the Franju version has been written off as a rehash rather than as a re-employment of memories from his youth for his own ends. Recollected from a child's point of view, the identification figures in it are the innocents: Edith Scob and the two children. Franju is the last director one would have expected to make a children's film, but now that he has done so, this seems the only approach he could possibly have adopted.

The British movie was *Station Six Sahara*, which the public loved and the critics didn't and the French entry was *Le Mepris*, which both groups hated. The real thrills came among the shorts, and here the non-Canadian entries proved how many holes there are in the London Film Festival's net. Thus Montreal had three films by Saul Bass, his first work outside commercials and titles. One was a witty cartoon about the rise of Broadway, made to fill a five minute gap in the Stan Freberg television show. The other two were sponsored films made for the New York World's Fair, both designed to be shown on two interlocked projectors (one 35mm and one 70mm). Even in the CinemaScope versions shown, the films made graphic use of varying screen shapes. One, sponsored by United Airlines and called *From Here To There*, starts and finishes in ordinary ratio sepia with airport departures and arrivals. It has, however, a central sequence in colour and (originally) 70mm of aerial shots taken on a trip across the United States—the compositions could not be controlled in the aircraft, so Bass masked them afterwards, frequently masking 'scope at top and bottom. The other film, a history of knowledge in twenty minutes, is equally filled with dazzling visual invention, but has a slightly pompous commentary. Saul Bass is now completing a non-sponsored film in which he shows a personal view of New York. None of these films appeared at the London Film Festival and nor did *Corps Profond*, by two film-makers from French television, Lalou and Barrère. This takes advantage of a gadget called a bronchoscope, a miniature periscope to film the inside of living human bodies. It contains panning shots around the inside of the bladder and technically the most remarkable tracking shot in the cinema—along the trachea, down one bronchus, back up to the trachea and down the other bronchus.

The Festival, apart from showing some admirable non-Canadian

films, revealed the Canadian cinema, or rather the French-Canadian cinema as even more impressive than its few exports suggested. In a city as lively as Montreal, it's not surprising that an interesting cinema should be born—the only limiting factor now seems to be the small size of the audience, which is pretty well restricted to Quebec Province. The English Canadian cinema has Norman McLaren, whose *Canon* goes further along the path of increasingly precious abstraction started in *Lines Horizontal and Vertical*, it has an interesting experimentalist in Arthur Lipsett, whose *Free Fall* took ideogrammatic cinema to extreme lengths with images of almost subliminal brevity, and a steady classical documentarist in Colin Low. His film, *The Hutterites*, which won the top prize for shorts is a decent, if backward-looking work. But in general the English-Canadian movies and, for that matter the English Canadians, are distinctly provincial.

The French Canadian films are a very different matter. The big guns were not represented (Claude Jutra's *A Tout Prendre* had been shown the previous year and Michel Brault's fine contribution to the Canadian-initiated episode film, *La Fleur de l'Age*, was to be shown at Venice). But still there was some interesting work to be seen, and the standards of photography and film music were unbelievably high. Among the directors, Gilles Carle has a keen satirical wit, while Gilles Groulx obviously has considerable talent. Groulx's first feature, *Le Chat dans le Sac*, was shot on the budget of a short for the National Film Board. Remarkably, for a state-financed movie, it is a sympathetic account of the emotional and related political problems of a young separatist: the young French-speaking film-makers are deeply involved with the Quebec separatist movement, which is by no means the lunatic fringe that British newspapers would have us believe. Groulx who worked with Michel Brault on *Seul ou avec des autres* extends that film's largely improvised and partly biographical method with much more success. It is a post-Godard movie, but also a post-*Cinéma Vérité* movie, which uses the possibilities of cheap all-location filming as a means rather than as an end. Certainly, it is immeasurably better than its English-speaking rival, a soggy story of blighted teenage love called *Nobody Waved Goodbye*, which was redeemed only by the charm and talent of its leading lady.

*Le Chat dans le Sac* was yet another miss for the London Film Festival. As if to excuse the omission, the B.F.I.'s house magazine wrote, without showing any evidence of having seen it that "Although *Le Chat dans le Sac*

## LONDON

O sudden has been the access of altruism on the part of the Rank Organisation. On the verge of being investigated by the Monopolies Commission, they have shelled out half a million pounds to the National Film Finance Corporation, those guardians of the Independent film maker.

Thus does the Rank Organisation ensure that the Independents have a chance against the big financing/distributing boys such as Rank.

But wait. A chance for what? To have their partially Rank financed films distributed by Rank Film Distributors Limited in

Rank, or even Top Rank, theatres after being shot in Rank studios and processed in Rank laboratories. Thus does the Independent film maker remain independent and the Rank Organisation remain the Rank Organisation.

Two film festivals from the second half of 1964 are worth recalling, if only because they do useful work out of the blaze of publicity surrounding the bigger shindigs at Cannes and Venice.

The Montreal Film Festival provided a first chance to see a French-speaking print of Franju's *Judex*, and proved it was the re-



managed to carry off the prize in Montreal as the best Canadian feature of the year, most interesting for us here is *Nobody Waved Goodbye*". [I.A.C.]

The Barcelona festival specialises in colour film and demonstrates with encouraging monotony that the only problems of filming in colour (apart from purely technological ones) are those created by the film makers themselves. The United States dominated the features, providing the only great (*The Cardinal*), fine (*Cheyenne Autumn*), or even tolerable movies (*Molly Brown*, *Topkapi*).

Among the shorts there was the usual dichotomy between the formless efficiency and the schematic "profundity" which constitute different but equally conventional views of the Film Art. The grotesque solemnity of most of the shorts gave added warmth to one's regard for Luc Moullet's two (unprized) entries. His films reflected the qualities of his flippant perceptive, correct and infuriating criticism. *Les Terres Noires* exploited an admirably spiteful burlesque of the conventional travelogue in order to give

a convincing impression of its subject, a depressed and depressing region of France. *La fille de Paname et le gars de Padou* (alternative title: *Capito*) presents in execrable colour an anecdotal parable of international confusion and co-operation. It has a cast of two and a running time of four minutes. The insolent wisdom of Moullet's approach demands complicity rather than criticism. Barcelona was unconvinced. [V.F.P.]

In Barcelona there fell into our hands a document which should be of interest to the ladies of Dean Street; it openly advocates critical criteria which those ladies have long been suspected of applying in the privacy of the Monthly Film Bulletin. I quote from the hand book of the "International Assembly on the Film for Youth" "In order to facilitate the work of the jurors and to encourage objectivity, the Management rules: films ought to unite the following qualities, in relation to which they will be assessed: (a) educative content (5 points out of 20); (b) moral tendency (6 out of 20); (c) aesthetic quality (5 out of 20); (d) international relevance (4 out of 20)".

## OTHER FILMS

**MY FAIR LADY.** No one should be surprised that in face of seventeen million dollars, George Cukor has not been able to have too much of his own way. Jack L. Warner, who personally produced this one, has insisted on maximum fidelity to the original—box office wisdom, for had one of the set pieces (like the white Ascot sequence, been omitted) the shrieks of protest would have been heard all the way to the bank. Given the impersonality of the enterprise, it is a piece of precision engineering. Even so, vitality, which was never the stage version's strong suit, has crumpled under the weight of all that money. Only "Get Me to the Church on Time" has any oomph. The saddest defect of the film in comparison with *Heller in Pink Tights* is that the colours aren't so hot. Cukor is without his usual colour consultant, George Hoyningen-Huene, and has to make do with the mere Cecil Beaton who was part of the package.

**THERESE DESQUEYROUX** Georges Franju follows Mauriac's book with astounding fidelity, and yet the film is recognisably his own. Therese's youthful summers contrast visually with the darkness of her captivity, and yet we can see in each the cruelty and beauty of the other. The film makes clear both the necessity and horror of Therese's attempted murder, the rightness and the wrong of her

extended expiation. A non-Catholic, Franju has given the most perfect rendering of the Catholic novel.

**RAVEN'S END** A film so impeccable in '30s period atmosphere—not just the *look* of poverty and ugliness but the *feel* of unrest, the recognition of a need for a new order—that it seems that the director must be reliving his own experience. Not so: the talented Bo Widerberg is still in his twenties. *Raven's End* is a great advance upon the same director's *The Baby Carriage* (Venice 1962) without its camera gimmickry but retaining the unfailing rightness of detail in the actor's performances. The family of three in *Raven's End* seems a real family, each knowing, loving, enduring the other.

**FAIL SAFE.** Sidney Lumet's movies usually make up for their awful excrescences by being seven-eighths convincing. *Fail Safe* is no exception; after a tacky start, it settles down to become twice as frightening as *Dr. Strangelove* and more horribly funny for leaving us to appreciate the appalling humour of the nuclear-mistake situation for ourselves. Also interesting to note that the film must have been fairly cheap to make: all the essential action takes place within three sets.

# MOVIE

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**GOODBYE CHARLIE.** Harry Kurnitz reincarnation comedy directed by Vincente Minnelli with maximum aplomb. A brilliant opening sequence leads into a movie extravagant with Minnelli touches—brittle parties, preposterous beauty salons, malicious little restaurants. Walter Matthau as a producer out of Korda via Pascal is outstanding in an impeccable played movie starring Debbie Reynolds, Tony Curtis and Pat Boone.

**A SHOT IN THE DARK.** Shrewd Blake Edwards already had this Inspector Clouseau sequel to *The Pink Panther* under way before *Panther* was released. Alas, Elke Sommer, the last minute choice of heroine after Romy Schneider and Sophia Loren, is no substitute for Capucine. Instead, the burden of the film falls on Peter Sellers and, inventive and splendidly sick though many of his gags are, they are not enough to sustain the film's length. Herbert Lom provides two moments of cruel humour.

**TOUS LES GARCONS S'APPELLENT PATRICK.** Witty anecdote from Jean-Luc Godard shown as a bonus to *Les Parapluies de Cherbourg*. Two girls who share an apartment are picked up separately on the same day by the same man (Jean-Claude Brialy). He's as different to them as they are from each other. The two girls arrange a possible foursome, only to see Patrick going off with a third

woman. As Godard might put it: 'Don't know whether it's a comedy or a tragedy, but either way it's a laugh'.

**RIO CONCHOS.** Gordon Douglas back on form after the lackadaisical if jovial *Robin and the Seven Hoods* with a handsome western for which Richard Boone's deadpan style and strength are well-suited. Edmond O'Brien's half-finished, half-furnished mansion in the desert captures visually the grotesque pomp of his situation.

Stills by courtesy of:  
Columbia for *Lord Jim*,  
M.G.M. for *The Brothers Karamazov*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*,  
*Sweet Bird of Youth*, *Sunday in New York*,  
Procusa for *Los Cien Caballeros*,  
Rank for *Marnie*, *Man's Favourite Sport*?  
Warner-Pathe for *King & Country*,  
*Cheyenne Autumn*,  
Derek Hill and the Short Film Service for *The Hat*,  
Twentieth Century-Fox for *Hush*...  
*Hush Sweet Charlotte*, *Goodbye Charlie*,  
Paramount for *The Disorderly Orderly*,  
Stig Björkman for *Love '65*,  
Gala for *The Silence*,  
Sandrews for *Dear John*,

Front cover and other photographs from *Lord Jim* by Ken Danvers.

Back cover: Helena Nilsson, Jarl Kulle and Christina Schollin in Lars Magnus Lindgren's *Dear John*.



